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## PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATION: A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLARINETIST-COMPOSER PARTNERSHIPS AND HOW THEY CONTRIBUTED TO CLARINET LITERATURE, AND THE INFLUENCE OF ROBERT SPRING ON CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITIONAL OUTPUT FOR THE CLARINET

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INFLUENCE OF ROBERT SPRING ON CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITIONAL  
OUTPUT FOR THE CLARINET

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D.M.A./Musical Arts Project

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A D.M.A. Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts  
in the College of Fine Arts  
at the University of Kentucky

By  
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2018

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## ABSTRACT OF D.M.A./Musical Arts Project

### PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATION: A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLARINETIST-COMPOSER PARTNERSHIPS AND HOW THEY CONTRIBUTED TO CLARINET LITERATURE, AND THE INFLUENCE OF ROBERT SPRING ON CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITIONAL OUTPUT FOR THE CLARINET

Throughout the history of the clarinet, there have been performers who have inspired composers to write pieces specifically for them. These contributions to clarinet literature have been significant, frequently resulting in an overall shift in the expectations of performers' abilities, and expanding the range of possibilities for composers. This document first describes the relationships of the following composers and clarinetists, and their resulting impact on clarinet literature: Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler, Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt, Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann, Johannes Brahms and Richard Mühlfeld, and the numerous commissions of Benny Goodman by some of the most highly-regarded composers of his time.

The main purpose of this document is to examine a contemporary clarinetist who has contributed considerably to the repertoire of the clarinet both through his virtuosic performances and his own commissions, Robert Spring. Dr. Spring's playing, particularly on the release of *Dragon's Tongue* (1994), astonished listeners and composers alike, most notably with his mastery of extended techniques such as circular breathing and double tonguing. Within this document is a biography of Dr. Spring, focusing on his early life, his musical training and education, and his work. Additionally, a list of works that he has commissioned with annotations where applicable is included, along with detailed comments on the partnership with Dr. Spring and the resulting creations from composers Stacy Garrop, Eric Mandat, Theresa Martin, Scott McAllister, Whitney Prince, Rodney Rogers, Peter Schickele, and William O. Smith. It is my belief that future scholars will be able to place him within the long line of composer-clarinetist partnerships that have advanced not only the clarinet's solo and chamber literature, but also the scope of performance techniques required of clarinetists.

KEYWORDS: clarinet, Robert Spring, commission, partnership, literature

Adria Leigh Sutherland

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April 6, 2018

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Date

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## PART I: MONOGRAPH

### Chapter 1

#### Background

In her article entitled “The Development of the Clarinet Repertoire” from Colin Lawson’s *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet* (1995), Jo Rees-Davies writes, “So much of the clarinet’s repertoire seems to have depended on this type of partnership; whereas the world of the violinist-composer is that of the isolated performer and may be justly regarded as a history of individualists, the clarinet world seems to have recorded a history of friendships.”<sup>1</sup> The particular relationship to which Rees-Davies is referring is that of composer Louis Spohr and clarinetist Simon Hermstedt.

As stated, the repertoire of the clarinet has been greatly influenced throughout its history by a composer becoming inspired by a certain musician’s playing, and then writing specifically for that person. Some of the most highly-regarded and widely-performed clarinet literature is a direct result of friendships forged between the composer and clarinetist. These works influenced contemporary and future composers and clarinetists to advance themselves in their writing and performing, and they are now considered standard pieces of this instrument’s literature.

Although there have been many of these relationships, there are six that are the most significant, based on the composers’ importance in the overall history of music, the level at which their music has impacted the repertoire, and the professional career and influence of the clarinetists themselves. These partnerships are:

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<sup>1</sup> Jo Rees-Davies. “The Development of the Clarinet Repertoire.” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 75-91.

1. Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer

Beer is recognized as the first clarinet virtuoso to establish the clarinet as a substantial solo instrument.

2. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler

Stadler's playing inspired the *Clarinet Quintet in A*, K. 581 (1789) and the *Clarinet Concerto in A major*, K. 622 (1791).

3. Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt

This partnership brought four concerti for clarinet and orchestra that are widely studied and performed throughout advanced clarinet studios worldwide.

4. Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann

This collaboration yielded the *Concertino in E-flat major*, Op. 26; the *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor*, Op. 73; the *Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in E-flat major*, Op. 74; and the *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings*, Op. 34.

5. Johannes Brahms and Richard Mühlfeld.

It has been reported that Mühlfeld's playing was so elegant that it inspired Brahms to resume composing after his retirement.<sup>2</sup>

The sixth influential clarinetist, whom most sources recognize as inspiring meaningful contributions to clarinet literature, changed the process of the player/composer relationship. Benny Goodman, jazz and classical clarinetist of the twentieth century, wanted to contribute to the contemporary classical clarinet literature, and thus commissioned works from some of the most highly-regarded composers of his time. Among these commissions are: (1) Bela Bartok's *Contrasts* (1938), a

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<sup>2</sup> Pamela Weston. "Players and Composers." in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). 92-106.

work for clarinet, violin, and piano; (2) Paul Hindemith's *Concerto for Clarinet in A and Orchestra* (1947); and (3) Aaron Copland's *Concerto for Clarinet, Strings and Harp* (1948); among several others.<sup>3 4</sup> While Goodman's commissioned composers differ from the ones mentioned previously in that they did not write several works for one inspirational clarinetist, they are similar in that they wrote significant works that were inspired by a specific clarinet virtuoso.

### **Need for the Study**

The extended scholarly writing on the topic of clarinetist-composer collaborations ended with Benny Goodman; since his career ended, there has been no substantial research focusing on individual clarinetists and their influence on compositional output. Individual composers' works have been catalogued, studied theoretically, and explored with respect to performance practices, but never has a large number of compositions written for one clarinetist been extensively catalogued with notes from the composers themselves, explaining the nature of the influence and how it affected their compositional style.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine a contemporary clarinetist's considerable contribution to clarinet repertoire both through his virtuosic performances and his own commissions, Robert Spring. Dr. Spring's playing, particularly on the release of the recording *Dragon's Tongue* (1994), astonished listeners and composers alike, most notably with his mastery of extended techniques such as circular breathing and multiple articulation. I believe that future scholars will place him within the long lineage of composer-clarinetist partnerships that have advanced not only the clarinet's solo and chamber literature, but also the scope of performance techniques required of clarinetists. At this date,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 103-104.

<sup>4</sup> Additional works commissioned by Benny Goodman include Morton Gould's *Derivations for Solo Clarinet and Dance Band* (1955), Francis Poulenc's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* (1962), and Malcolm Arnold's *Clarinet Concerto No. 2, Op. 115* (1974).

no research such as this has been conducted or written, and my hope is that this investigation will be considered helpful to the field.

### **Delimitations**

In order to keep the historical portion relevant yet brief, allowing the main substance of the paper to include Dr. Spring and his inspired clarinet works, I will limit my scope of past composer-clarinetist relationships to the ones previously mentioned: Stamitz/Beer, Mozart/Stadler, Spohr/Hermstedt, Weber/Baermann, Brahms/Mühlfeld, and Benny Goodman's numerous contributions, drawing conclusions between the clarinetists' performance abilities and the way composers wrote for them.

### **Review of Literature**

Currently, there is a significant amount of literature on the composer-clarinetist relationship in reference to compositional influence and output until Benny Goodman's era. Probably the most comprehensive book on the clarinet in general is *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, which is part of the *Cambridge Companions to Music* series, and is edited by Colin Lawson. Lawson is an English clarinetist and scholar, and is internationally recognized as a performer of chalumeaux and historical clarinets. He has held principal clarinet positions in leading British period orchestras, most notably The English Concert and the London Classical Players.<sup>5</sup>

Within the *Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, there are several informative chapters. For instance, "The Development of the Clarinet," written by Nicholas Shackleton, discusses the origins of the

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<sup>5</sup> "Colin Lawson," retrieved from Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin\\_Lawson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Lawson), November 27, 2015.

clarinet, and traces its growth and development over time. This chronology is essential to know and understand when researching clarinet works throughout history, as the key work and structure of the instrument changed considerably, lending itself to more chromaticism and lyricism over the years.<sup>6</sup>

Also within the Cambridge Companion is a chapter written by Jo Rees-Davies, mentioned at the beginning of this proposal. Rees-Davies, both an esteemed performer and teacher of clarinet as well as the librarian of the Clarinet & Saxophone Society of Great Britain since 1984,<sup>7</sup> wrote a chapter entitled “The Development of Clarinet Repertoire,” which chronologically examines the types of writing that occurred for the clarinet, and explains their significance.

Pamela Weston, clarinet soloist, teacher, and prolific contributor to the *New Grove*,<sup>8</sup> authored the most important chapter in the Cambridge Companion to this particular paper: “Players and Composers.” In her chapter, Weston briefly details the previously mentioned partnerships, and adds to it several others from lesser-known clarinetists and less prolific composers. From her inclusions, the clarinetist-composer partnership throughout history may be traced with ease.

Weston’s books, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (1971) and *More Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (1977), both published in England by Fentone Music Limited, offer bibliographic information as well as entertaining anecdotes on most, if not all, of the well-known clarinetists throughout the instrument’s history. She is incredibly thorough in her research; in the first publication, the reader can find the background of the “really great clarinet players,” their training, and how their careers developed with inclusion of relationships with composers, other musicians, and organizations.<sup>9</sup> In the second, she “investigated on a wide scale the lives of a very much larger number of players.” While these clarinetists

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<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Shackleton. “The Development of the Clarinet,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16-32.

<sup>7</sup> “Contributors,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), x.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, xi.

<sup>9</sup> Pamela Weston. Preface to *More Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past*. (Cosby, England: Fentone Music Limited, 1977).

are not as extensively researched, Weston does include some biographical information, creating another relevant research tool.<sup>10</sup>

Other essential literature includes Colin Lawson's *Mozart Clarinet Concerto* (1996) and *Brahms Clarinet Quintet* (1998), both volumes in the *Cambridge Music Handbooks* series. Each of these books is detailed in their exploration of the composers' styles, the meetings of their respective muses, and the way their writings for the clarinet changed once under their influences.

The work of Colin Lawson, Nicholas Shackleton, Jo Rees-Davies, and Pamela Weston make up the bulk of scholarly writing about the clarinetists of the past and their relationships and influences on composers. Other notable publications concerning this topic are Wolfgang Sander's *Die Klarinette bei Carl Maria von Weber*, which is a very extensive overview of the literature and reviews of Weber's clarinet music, but does not include detailed information about his relationship with Heinrich Baermann.<sup>11</sup> Clive Brown's book, *Louis Spohr, A Critical Biography*, contains insightful information on Spohr's relationship with Simon Hermstedt, even quoting Spohr as saying, "Since at the time my knowledge of the clarinet was pretty nearly limited to its range and I therefore paid little attention to the weaknesses of the instrument, I have thus written much that will appear to the clarinetist at first sight as impracticable. Herr Hermstedt, however, far from asking me to alter these passages, sought rather to perfect his instrument and soon by continuous industry arrived at the point where his clarinet had no faulty, dull, uncertain tones."<sup>12</sup> This particular quote bears evidence to the fact that Hermstedt not only inspired great compositions, but improved the quality of the clarinet itself.

There is a significant amount of scholarship on Benny Goodman and his contributions to clarinet literature. Probably the most comprehensive source for the Aaron Copland *Concerto for Clarinet*,

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Wolfgang Sandner. *Die Klarinette bei Carl Maria von Weber*. (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1971), 156.

<sup>12</sup> Clive Brown. *Louis Spohr, A Critical Biography*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 50.



*Strings, and Harp* is Howard Pollack's biography, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*,<sup>13</sup> because it is so well-researched from various sources. Ross Firestone wrote a wonderful biography of Benny Goodman himself, entitled *Swing, Swing, Swing: The Life & Times of Benny Goodman*,<sup>14</sup> which contains information on his commissions and how they came to be.

All of these resources, although centering on clarinetists of the past, provide excellent models as I approach my own research of Robert Spring. In order to include him in the history of clarinetists who have made significant contributions, I must understand how the preceding clarinetists were viewed.

Current scholarly research on clarinet literature consists of several dissertations on individual composers, such as Joan Tower and Eric Mandat, but there is little written about individual contemporary clarinetists. There are, however, wonderful resources for extended clarinet techniques to be used in performance, which are part of the reason Robert Spring was noticed and pursued by several composers. In his book *New Directions for Clarinet*,<sup>15</sup> Phillip Rehfeldt explores and explains monophonic and multiphonic fingerings, glissandos, flutter tongue, vocal sounds, and circular breathing, to name a few. Double tonguing is mentioned only briefly. Additionally, since the book was published in 1994, its inclusion of music is outdated. Michele Gingras wrote a more comprehensive pedagogical book entitled *Clarinet Secrets* which covers much of the same performance elements in the "Enhancing Repertoire" chapter.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Howard Pollack. *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Ross Firestone. *Swing, Swing, Swing: The Life & Times of Benny Goodman*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> Phillip Rehfeldt. *New Directions for Clarinet*, revised edition. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> Michele Gingras. *Clarinet Secrets: 52 Performance Strategies for the Advanced Clarinetist*, revised edition. (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2006).

The best current model for my research is a dissertation by Amy Alizabeth Turnbull, on Richard Stoltzman.<sup>17</sup> In her document, Turnbull writes about his personal life, his education, and his career, considering him an innovator who is sometimes misunderstood by traditional classical clarinetists. There is a divergence from tradition in Robert Spring's playing as well, which is something I believe him to be proud of. However, in Turnbull's dissertation, she does not explore Stoltzman's influence on the compositional output for the clarinet as much as I do in my study of Dr. Spring.

### **Methodology**

The main part of my paper is a biography of Robert Spring, acquired by in-person, telephone, and email interviews. Aside from the brief biographical sketch on the Arizona State University School of Music website, where he is a member of the faculty, the only biography to date of Dr. Spring exists within this document.

Included within this biography are the details of Dr. Spring's upbringing, his early musical influences, and the story of his beginnings as a clarinetist and pedagogue. Also included will be inquiries into a substantial number of compositions written for or inspired by him. Dr. Spring has provided information about these works, including the date and location of premieres when possible.

I have also included interviews with eight commissioned composers, requesting similar information as Dr. Spring provided, but with another important question: I inquire how Robert Spring's playing influenced their writing for the clarinet. All of this information is categorized by the composer, and then genre of the work (i.e. solo clarinet, clarinet and piano, chamber music), and finally cross-referenced in the appendices. This section of the paper serves as a type of thematic catalogue, giving

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<sup>17</sup> Amy Alizabeth Turnbull. "Richard Stoltzman: Defying Categorization." (DMA diss., The University of Iowa, 2011).

the following information about each piece: the composer and date of completion, details of the premiere performance, and any additional commissioning musicians, when available.

The upcoming chapters of this document are as follows:

## Chapter 2 - Background of Composer/Clarinetist Partnerships, and the Resulting Compositions and Changes to Clarinet Literature

- a. Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer
- b. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler
- c. Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt
- d. Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann
- e. Johannes Brahms and Richard Mühlfeld
- f. Benny Goodman and his commissions

Within this chapter, I give an overview of the great composer/clarinetist partnerships throughout the history of the instrument. I explain how the composer and clarinetist met, discuss compositions that resulted from the partnership, and explore how the composer's methods of writing changed throughout the collaboration.

## Chapter 3 - Robert Spring – Biography

Since there has been no extensive, or even brief, biography written about Robert Spring, I provide with this section a look into his past. Included are Dr. Spring's childhood, family life, early musical influences, as well as his own early training and formal education. Additionally, other musical

influences that he appreciates and/or draws upon in performance or at leisure are discussed here in the context of the possibility of influencing commissions.

#### Chapter 4 - Compositions Written for Robert Spring, both Commissioned and Non-Commissioned

- a. List of Works, with discussion about the following, where applicable:
  - i. Commission and/or collaboration
  - ii. Instrumentation and genre
  - iii. Date that the work was completed
  - iv. Premiere performance of the work

This chapter provides a list of works commissioned by or simply written for Robert Spring.

#### Chapter 5 – Composers’ Styles and the Influence of Robert Spring

Within this chapter, I provide a brief biography of select composers that have written pieces for Robert Spring, and I describe the way that their writing styles may or may not have changed upon hearing his performances. Additionally, musical examples are provided to illustrate technical skills that have been written specifically because of Dr. Spring’s influence. Interviewed composers include Stacy Garrop, Eric Mandat, Theresa Martin, Scott McAllister, Whitney Prince, Rodney Rogers, Peter Schickele, and William O. Smith.

#### Chapter 6 – Conclusion

#### Appendix I – Interview with Robert Spring

#### Appendix II – Robert Spring Commissions, organized by instrumentation

### **Expected Findings**

It is my sincere hope, with this document, to add to the long line of composer-clarinetist relationships by reviewing the history of such relationships, and by explaining the nature of Robert Spring's contributions with his own artistry and his commissions. In addition, I hope to add a useful thematic catalogue of these contemporary clarinet compositions written for Dr. Spring by adding the details previously listed.

## Chapter 2

### **Background of Composer/Clarinetist Relationships, and the Resulting Compositions and Changes to Clarinet Literature**

In her article entitled “Players and Composers” from Colin Lawson’s *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, Pamela Weston describes three distinct types of musicians who have influenced composition for any instrument throughout history. The first type is the professional virtuoso who directly inspires a composer; the second type is the player-inventor, who is generally associated with mechanically operated instruments such as the clarinet, and the innovations that led to greater compositional possibilities; and the third is the musician who commissions works that expand and enhance the repertoire.<sup>18</sup> This paper seeks to distinguish the most significant of the professional virtuosos and their collaborative composers, as well as the commissioners whose own musical performances were responsible for a marked change in clarinet writing.

#### Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer

The first notable clarinetist-composer partnership was that of violinist and composer Karl Stamitz (1745-1801) and Joseph Beer of Bohemia. Beer (1744-1812) is considered to be the first great clarinet soloist and the founder of the French style of playing. He formed a relationship with Karl Stamitz in Paris, 1770, once Stamitz had left the Mannheim Court Orchestra.<sup>19</sup> Stamitz wrote eleven concerti for the clarinet, and it is known that at least six, but possibly all, of these were written for Beer. These concerti are among the earliest written for the clarinet, and are some of the finest written by Mozart’s contemporaries.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Pamela Weston, “Players and composers.” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 92.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>20</sup> Allan Badley. Liner notes to *Carl Stamitz Clarinet Concertos, Vol. 2*. Kálmán Berkes, NAXOS 8.554339, CD, 1999.

Stamitz was well-acquainted with the clarinet prior to his move in 1770 because the Mannheim court orchestra was among the first to include it as a core instrument in the orchestra. During the 1760s, that instrument had been modified, improving its tonal flexibility and intonation, and composers began to show a greater interest in it. Stamitz's concerti, influenced by Beer's unrivalled technical command of the improved instrument, were important in the development of the clarinet as a solo instrument.<sup>21</sup> These compositions gained significance largely due to Beer's virtuosic performances in Paris, which led to the *Almanach Dauphin* listing Stamitz as 'compositeur pour clarinette'.<sup>22</sup>

Joseph Beer's influence spread beyond his collaboration with Karl Stamitz, undoubtedly impacting other musicians and composers. His French style of clarinet playing has been described as brilliant and voluble,<sup>23</sup> and while Parisians had formerly disliked the piercing and harsh sound of the clarinet, they were pleased with the tone that Beer produced.<sup>24</sup> In addition to performing in the Mannheim orchestra, he had an appointment as clarinetist in the Duke of Orleans' household, with the Prussian court, the imperial theatre in Moscow, and maintained an international solo career during his lifetime. Although Mozart described Joseph Beer in a letter to his father on July 9<sup>th</sup> of 1778 as a 'dissolute sort of fellow' with whom he would rather not associate, he also mentioned that he was 'an excellent clarinet player'.<sup>25</sup> He taught several notable pupils throughout his life, the greatest of these being Heinrich Baermann.

#### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart had been previously acquainted with the clarinet before meeting Anton Stadler (1753-1812). He was introduced to the instrument in a 1764 London visit, and the first

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Weston, "Players and composers." in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 93.

<sup>23</sup> Pamela Weston. *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (London: Robert Hale & Co., 1971), 29.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 34.

time he composed for it was in his Divertimento K113, written in 1771,<sup>26</sup> a piece which began to explore some of the clarinet's chromatic abilities.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, Mozart's experience hearing the clarinet upon his arrival in Mannheim in 1777, where the instrument's potential had been further explored, resulted in a letter to his father, December 3, 1778, in which he proclaimed, "Ah, if only we had clarinets too! You cannot imagine the glorious effect of a symphony with flutes, oboes, and clarinets."<sup>28</sup> Mozart's final involvement with the clarinet before meeting Anton Stadler may be examined in *Idomeneo*, written for the Munich court orchestra in 1781. Although there is idiomatic use of the clarinet in major and minor thirds and sixths, the chalumeau register of the instrument is largely excluded.<sup>29</sup>

The Stadler brothers, Anton and Johann, were the first clarinetists to be employed with the Viennese imperial court<sup>30</sup> as well as the emperor's *Harmonie*, and it was in Vienna where Mozart had his first encounter with Anton Stadler in 1784. The two men performed in concert together a year or two later, evoking Johann Friedrich Schink's response in his *Litterarische Fragmente*<sup>31</sup>:

My thanks to you, brave virtuoso! I have never heard the like of what you contrived with your instrument. Never should I have thought that a clarinet could be capable of imitating the human voice as it was imitated by you. Indeed, your instrument has so soft and lovely a tone that no one with a heart can resist it – and I have one, dear Virtuoso; let me thank you. I heard music for wind instruments today, too, by Herr Mozart, in four movements. Four horns, two oboes, two bassoons, two clarinets, two basset horns, a double bass, and at each instrument sat a master – oh, what a glorious effect it made – glorious and grand, excellent and sublime!<sup>32 33</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The Divertimento K113 was composed in November 1771 for the private orchestra of a patron in Milan.

<sup>27</sup> Colin Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, from Cambridge Music Handbooks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>30</sup> Weston. "Players and composers." in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 93.

<sup>31</sup> Published in Graz, 1784-1785.

<sup>32</sup> Lawson, *Mozart, Clarinet Concerto*, 18.

<sup>33</sup> Schink refers to a performance of Mozart's Serenade for thirteen instruments K361/370a. As well as increased idiomatic writing for the clarinet, its clarinet parts show a greater understanding of the instrument.



Anton Stadler's newly invented clarinet, which had an extended lower range descending to written C3, inspired Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio K498 for clarinet, viola, and piano, the *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings* K581 (1789), the obbligato parts in *La clemenza di Tito* (1791), and the *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* K622 (1791).<sup>34</sup> Stadler's command of the clarinet's chalumeau register, in particular, marks a significant change in the writing for the instrument. Where this register was once avoided, Mozart exploits it in his compositions for Stadler, who could reportedly produce a full and satisfactory tone in his lower range.<sup>35</sup> Due to Stadler's voice-like lyrical playing, and his technical fluency throughout the entire range of the instrument, Mozart was able to write more virtuosic music than previous composers had ventured.

Mozart's works inspired by and specifically composed for Anton Stadler were described by Jo-Rees Davies as "the clarinet's main glory. His Concerto in A major K622 for Clarinet and Orchestra is arguably the greatest concerto written for the instrument, and the magnificent Quintet K581 is the most important of its kind."<sup>36</sup> This partnership of clarinetist and composer extended the musical and technical expectations of the clarinetist, as well as opened a much larger realm of compositional possibilities, heightening the reputation of the clarinet as a solo instrument unlike any other.

#### Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt

Louis Spohr (1784-1859), German composer and conductor, was also a respected violinist during his lifetime. Among his many accomplishments, he composed eighteen violin concertos, he invented the violin chinrest, he was the first to use rehearsal marks in orchestral literature, and is remembered

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<sup>34</sup> Weston, "Players and composers." in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 93.

<sup>35</sup> Nicholas Shackleton. "Clarinet." *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*. Ed. Stanley Sadie. Vol. 1. (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1984.)

<sup>36</sup> Rees-Davies, "The Development of the Clarinet Repertoire." *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 80.

for his *Violinschule* (The Violin School), a treatise that explained the most recent advances in violin technique.

Johann Simon Hermstedt (1778-1846), virtuosic court clarinetist to Duke Günther I of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, was compared with his contemporary Heinrich Baermann as the great clarinetist of his era.<sup>37</sup> However, while Baermann was regarded for his beautiful sound, Hermstedt's technical abilities earned him an audience.

Hermstedt first met Spohr in 1808, when the Duke commissioned from him a clarinet concerto. That first commission was critical in the development of the clarinet repertoire, as well as the clarinet itself. The Duke was willing to pay handsomely for a piece that would effectively showcase his Konzertdirektor's abilities, and the resulting concerto received his following review:

Since no composition whatever existed in which this excellent artist could display all the superiority of his playing, Herr Konzertmeister Spohr of Gotha has written one for him; and setting aside this special purpose, it belongs to the most spirited and beautiful music which this justly famous master has ever written.<sup>38</sup>

Spohr's compositional style was violinistic and too technically difficult for the five- to six-keyed clarinet of that era, which led to the Hermstedt's adaptations to his instrument. In order to play the passages he added seven extra keys and improved the bore and tone holes,<sup>39</sup> which Spohr explained in the preface to the 1810 printed edition:

Since at that time my knowledge of the clarinet was pretty nearly limited to its range and I therefore paid little attention to the weaknesses of the instrument, I have thus written much that will appear to the clarinetist at first sight as unpracticable. Herr Hermstedt, however, far from asking me to alter these passages, sought rather to

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<sup>37</sup> Stephen Keith Johnston, *The Clarinet Concertos of Louis Spohr* (PhD diss. University of Maryland, College Park, 1972), 34.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, *Louis Spohr: A Critical Biography*, 50.

<sup>39</sup> Pamela Weston. "Hermstedt, Simon." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed October 1, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.eky.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/12873>.

perfect his instrument and soon by continuous industry arrived at the point where his clarinet had no faulty, dull, uncertain tones.<sup>40</sup>

Hermstedt concertized throughout Gotha, Leipzig, Hildburghausen, Erfurt, Nuremburg, Dresden, Berlin, Gottingen, Hamberg, Cassel, Breslau, Frankfurt, Vienna, and Amsterdam, as well as several German festivals.<sup>41</sup> Towards the beginning of his tour, the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung published a review:

In the previous week we heard here the chamber musician from Sondershausen, Herr Hermstedt. Not often has a virtuoso delighted the entire audience in the auditorium, and perhaps never a virtuoso on a wind instrument. But Herr Hermstedt is also, in all likelihood, the superior of all leading clarinetists... he conquers difficulties on his instrument with greatest facility, precision, and grace – difficulties which one felt until now were impossible to surmount with success.<sup>42</sup>

When Spohr was twenty-six years old, Hermstedt asked him to write another clarinet concerto, and he composed the Second Clarinet Concerto in E flat major, Op. 57, in a few weeks. The second concerto was the finest clarinet writing in many respects up to that time, and was thought to have achieved a greater musical substance and depth than Weber, his contemporary, had done.<sup>43</sup>

In total, Spohr composed four clarinet concertos, two sets of variations, as well as several smaller pieces, all for Hermstedt.<sup>44</sup> These pieces truly bear witness to Hermstedt's abilities as a performer, and Spohr owed his understanding of the clarinet's possibilities to him.<sup>45</sup> Much like Stadler

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<sup>40</sup> Brown, *Louis Spohr: A Critical Biography*, 51.

<sup>41</sup> Johnston, *The Clarinet Concertos of Louis Spohr*, 38.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>43</sup> Brown, *Louis Spohr: A Critical Biography*, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Shackelton, "Clarinet." *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*.

<sup>45</sup> Rees-Davies, "The Development of the Clarinet Repertoire." *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*,

had done with Mozart, Hermstedt drew from Spohr idiomatic writing, which explored the instrument's possibilities to the furthest extent and prompted some much needed technical advancements.<sup>46</sup>

#### Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann

Heinrich Baermann (1784-1847), a clarinet virtuoso of the Romantic era, was not only influential by way of his performance abilities, but also inspired the creation of several compositions from notable composers that are still widely studied and programmed to this day. Among these composers was Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826), most widely known for his German operas.

In 1811, Baermann and Weber began their friendship, which initially grew strength from Baermann's agreement to assist Weber on his concert tour's performances. Baermann's ultimatum was that he would be provided with a new solo to play, and this brought the *Concertino for Clarinet*, Op. 26 into the clarinet repertoire. Weber composed the piece in three days, and Heinrich had only three days to learn it before the premiere on April 5. Despite the rush, the performance greatly impressed the audience, leading to the King's commission for Weber to write two more works specifically for the clarinet. On May 17, the *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor*, Op. 73 was completed, and by July 12, the *Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in Eb Major*, Op. 74 was finished. On September 24, Weber began work on his *Clarinet Quintet*, Op. 34 (completed August 25, 1816, just in time for Baermann to premiere it the following day).<sup>47</sup> Additional compositions that arose from this friendship include *Seven Variations*, Op. 33, which was influenced by a theme from Weber's opera *Sylvania* and was composed overnight by the two men on a Prague concert tour, and a "Duet" for clarinet and piano that they performed in 1815, which many believe is the Andante and Allegro of the *Grand Duo Concertante*, Op. 48.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Shackelton, "Clarinet." *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*.

<sup>47</sup> Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past*, 189

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

This partnership between Heinrich Baermann and Carl Maria von Weber brought about Romantic virtuoso works that have been proclaimed the most important additions to the clarinet's repertoire since Mozart.<sup>49</sup> While these compositions are invaluable to clarinetists, they were also important to Weber himself; Baermann's virtuosic performances of these pieces aided in building audiences' interests in the composer at a time that he needed more popularity. In her book *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past*, Pamela Weston quotes Weber's son Max Maria as writing:

Baermann's bright genial character and sterling worth soon won the young Weber's heart. Carl Maria, always ready with his sympathies, attached himself in the warmest friendship to this excellent fellow – a friendship which lasted through their lifetimes. In their communion as artists, or in long years of separation, never was this friendship weakened. With such similarity of character, no two men could have been more dissimilar in personal appearance; Weber thin, pale, weakly; Baermann tall, athletic, with a magnificently handsome head. Carl Maria would laughingly say of the personal advantage of his friend, "All the choicest tit-bits in life are presented to that handsome fellow on a silver platter; poor devils like me must beg for the crumbs which fall from his magnificence's table.

#### Johannes Brahms and Richard Mühlfeld

In 1890, German composer Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) decided that he would retire from composing. "Though it was in the summer of 1890 that he composed the buoyant G major (viola) Quintet, his friend Billroth, visiting him at Ischl in May, reported of him in a letter: 'He rejected the idea that he is composing or will ever compose anything.'"<sup>50</sup>

Approximately one year after this decision, Brahms was introduced to the clarinet playing of German clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld (1856-1907) by the court conductor of Meiningen, Fritz Steinbach.<sup>51</sup> The result of this partnership was the final group of chamber works written by Brahms: the Clarinet Trio

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Daniel Gregory Mason, *The Chamber Music of Brahms* (Ann Arbor, MI: J. W. Edwards, 1950), 219.

<sup>51</sup> Pamela Weston. "Mühlfeld, Richard." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed October 1, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.uky.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/19300>.

Op. 114, the Clarinet Quintet Op. 115, and the two Clarinet/Viola Sonatas Op. 120, all of which constituted a major addition to the repertoire of the clarinet. Daniel Gregory Mason states in his writing on Brahms, “The particular incitement to the composition of these last four works (for clarinet) was Brahms’ delight in the clarinet playing of his friend Richard Mühlfeld, of the Meiningen Orchestra, whom he considered the greatest player on any wind instrument known to him.”<sup>52</sup>

Mühlfeld was the “perfect vehicle for the creative genius in Brahms;”<sup>53</sup> he was both a fine clarinetist as well as an intelligent and perceptive artist with a vocal quality to his playing that created a very “profound impression.”<sup>54</sup> In her book *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past*, Pamela Weston describes that impression as “less that of a superb executant on the clarinet than of an ultra-fine artist who had merely chosen the clarinet as his medium of expression.” Brahms wrote to his friend Clara Schumann: “Nobody can blow the clarinet more beautifully than Herr Mühlfeld of this place.”<sup>55</sup>

While composing his clarinet works, Brahms discussed the capabilities of the clarinet with Mühlfeld in order to provide the most idiomatic writing possible for his era, and additionally consulted the manuscripts of Mozart’s *Clarinet Quintet* and Weber’s clarinet concerti.<sup>56</sup> Each work written for Mühlfeld was premiered alongside Brahms, who derived so much joy from their performances together throughout Germany and Austria that he gifted exclusive performing rights to Mühlfeld during his lifetime, all of the earnings from their joint performances, and both sonata manuscripts after their publication.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Mason, *The Chamber Music of Brahms*, 220.

<sup>53</sup> Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past*, 209.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 216.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Weston, “Mühlfeld, Richard.” *Grove Music Online*.

## Benny Goodman

Benjamin David Goodman (1909-1986), widely respected as an American clarinetist, composer, and bandleader, was dubbed the “King of Swing” for his successful career as a jazz musician. A lesser known side of Goodman, however, was his great interest in classical music which began in the 1930s and continued until his death, when one of Brahms’ clarinet sonatas was found to be the last piece on his music stand.<sup>58</sup> Goodman’s performances and recordings of classical music, as well as his own studies with well-known clarinet teachers, elevated his status in the classical world, but it was his commissions of new works that place him within what Pamela Weston described as the third distinct type of musician who has influenced composition for any instrument throughout history.

Goodman’s first classical public performance was in 1935, when he played Mozart’s *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A Major* at a parlor concert within John Hammond’s<sup>59</sup> mother’s home. His early training on the clarinet, which he had received with Franz Schoepp at the Chicago Hull House, had been oriented largely around classical music, even though he had concentrated solely on jazz music in his early career.<sup>60</sup> Various performances and recordings followed, to mixed reviews from critics. Despite the lack of understanding and favor from loyal jazz listeners, he explained that he took up classical music because “I wanted something else to do to give myself a challenge.”<sup>61</sup>

In 1939, Goodman expanded his involvement with classical music by performing Bela Bartók’s *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Violin*, a chamber piece for clarinet, violin and piano that was later retitled

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<sup>58</sup> “Goodman, Benny.” *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed October 3, 2017.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.uky.edu/subscriber/article/epm/10433>.

<sup>59</sup> John Hammond was an American jazz and popular record producer and critic who took great interest in promoting Benny Goodman’s career.

<sup>60</sup> Jae Ellis Bull. “Benny Goodman: From “King of Swing” to Third Stream.” (MA Thesis, Marshall University, 2006), 13.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

*Contrasts*.<sup>62</sup> The creation of this work resulted from a casual conversation between violist József Szigeti and Goodman, and they approached Bartók together. In an August 11, 1938 letter to Bartók, Szigeti described the piece that they required, and reassured him about Goodman's clarinet playing abilities:

I can assure you that whatever a clarinet is physically able to do, Benny can get out of the instrument, and wonderfully (in much higher regions than the high note of the "Eulenspiegel" [*Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* by Richard Strauss]. But to a certain extent the records will show you his sound and virtuosity. Do not be frightened by the 'hot jazz' records, he has already recorded the Mozart Quintet with the Budapest Quartet, and the next season he will play Prokofieff's chamber work for clarinet and strings in the New Friends of Music Series. The New York Philharmonic has also asked him to give a concert.<sup>63</sup>

Bartók's *Contrasts* contains some elements from classical practice, but also includes a variety of scales that are commonly found in jazz and improvised music, such as the Lydian mode with a flat seventh (common to Romanian folk music), the octatonic scale, and the whole tone scale.<sup>64</sup>

This piece began a succession of works commissioned by Goodman, and while he was primarily interested in generating new repertoire for himself from some of the most well-known classical composers of the day, the net result was a substantial expansion of clarinet literature.<sup>65</sup>

Goodman commissioned both Aaron Copland's *Concerto for Clarinet* and Paul Hindemith's *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* at the beginning of 1947, just weeks apart. Goodman's terms for the arrangements were to have exclusive performance rights for two years for the price of two thousand dollars.

In his clarinet concerto, Copland added jazz material and American popular music in the form of 'boogie woogie' and Brazilian folk tunes.<sup>66</sup> It was completed in 1948, but was not premiered with the NBC Symphony Orchestra until 1950.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 17.



Paul Hindemith's *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* is not performed as often as his *Clarinet Sonata*, but it is still considered to be part of the classical standard clarinet repertoire. Despite Hindemith's own interest in jazz during his early career, he refrains from adding any reference to Goodman's jazz background in his concerto. It remains, however, a part of Goodman's classical commissions, and demonstrates his dedication to adding to the repertoire.<sup>67</sup>

Dedicated to Arthur Honegger, Francis Poulenc's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* was commissioned by Goodman in 1962, but was premiered after Poulenc's death in 1963 by Benny Goodman and Leonard Bernstein, who played the piano part.<sup>68</sup> The work capitalizes on Goodman's ease in the altissimo register of the clarinet, particularly in the third movement.

Leonard Bernstein's *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs* for solo clarinet and jazz ensemble (1949) was originally intended for clarinetist Woody Herman and his band, but it was instead premiered in 1955 by Benny Goodman and his band during a television program called "What is Jazz?"<sup>69</sup> and is often associated with Goodman's commissions.

These partnerships between composers and clarinetists have produced some of the most well-known and widely respected works in clarinet literature, and as each one appeared, it elevated the expectations of players and composers within that generation and beyond. This music and the partnerships involved have been studied and revered by students and teachers, and will continue to be an integral part of clarinet history and literature.

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<sup>66</sup> Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis. *Copland: Since 1943* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 102-103.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 42.

### Chapter 3

#### **Robert Spring**

Robert Spring has been described as “one of this country’s most sensitive and talented clarinetists” by *Arizona Republic*, and *The Clarinet Magazine* stated that he “dazzled his audience” and had “flawless technique.”<sup>70</sup> His recordings, particularly *Dragon’s Tongue*, which contains virtuoso music for clarinet and wind band, and *Tarantelle*, clarinet performances of music that violinist Jascha Heifetz recorded on violin, have met worldwide critical acclaim.

Dr. Spring attended the University of Michigan, where he was awarded his bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in music. He also won the “Citation of Merit Award” from the School of Music Alumni Society. He has performed with symphony orchestras and wind ensembles throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and South America.<sup>71</sup> He enjoys teaching on the faculties of several summer music festivals, and he has published many articles on contemporary and extended clarinet techniques.<sup>72</sup>

Dr. Spring is currently Professor of Music in Clarinet at Arizona State University, where he has served on the faculty since 1988, and he is a Guest Professor at Beijing Central Conservatory of Music. He was President of the International Clarinet Association from 1998-2000, and he is a Selmer Artist.

The following biography of Robert Spring is the first that has been written. The information and quotes were obtained in a personal interview that took place in Lawrence, Kansas during the International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest on August 5, 2016. A transcript of the interview is included within this document as Appendix I.

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<sup>70</sup> “Robert Spring.” Arizona State University, iSearch. Accessed November 25, 2017.  
<https://isearch.asu.edu/profile/87432>.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

## Early Life and Musical Beginnings

Robert Spring was born June 20, 1955 in Jackson, Michigan. His father, Samuel N. Spring, was an accountant for a utility company in Michigan where he retired as a controller and vice president, and his mother, Virginia H. Spring, was a homemaker. His parents were both musical; his father was a clarinetist and saxophonist who put himself through college by playing in dance bands, and his mother was a pianist. He remembers having music throughout his home as a child, and grew to love listening to it. Spring recalls that his father would do his office work after the children were in bed at night, listening to his old RCA fold-up record player. Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and Oscar Levant playing *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra were among his favorites.

Spring was the oldest of five boys, all of whom were involved in music, from taking piano lessons and playing in the school band, to singing in their Presbyterian Church choir. His piano lessons began at the age of four with the type of teacher who hit his hands when a mistake was made, and he discontinued them when he was sixteen years old. Regardless of his many years of study and by his own admission, he never became a good pianist, and never found a love for music through that instrument.

Spring grew up with a strong work ethic in a family where everyone was taught to contribute. He paid for his own piano lessons by mowing lawns throughout high school, and he worked on a construction crew while in college, where he was assigned grueling tasks.

When Spring entered the sixth grade, he and his classmates had the opportunity to spend a day shadowing older students at Frost Junior High School. The person to whom Spring was assigned happened to be in the band, and he was able to sit within the ensemble while they played a watered-down version of the Henry Fillmore march *Americans We*. Even though the band director had a harsh and negative style of teaching, Spring thought that it was the most amazing sound that he had ever heard. Looking back on that experience as a junior high student, Spring attributes witnessing that

negativity as one of the reasons he wanted to go into music education. He remembers thinking, “Isn’t there a better way to do this?”

When Spring entered junior high school, he chose the clarinet to play, largely because his father had played it, and they had one in his house already. This first instrument was a LeBlanc clarinet with a white mouthpiece, which eventually got traded for a Conn plastic clarinet, which he admits was a bad choice. As a young student, he had no private instruction or clarinet group instruction, and recalls every piece of information being delivered from his band director. Therefore, a large portion of his initial clarinet playing was self-invented, including made-up fingerings, improper assembly, anchor tonguing, and embouchure. He played with a double lip embouchure because he did not know there was another option, and he switched to a single lip embouchure only after a friend shared with him that he should place his teeth on the mouthpiece to avoid experiencing pain while marching.

At the end of junior high school, Spring’s band director decided to have an unannounced chair reseating audition for the clarinet section. Unfortunately for Spring, who was unprepared for the audition and had no working reeds with him, he was reassigned from first to last chair, and he left junior high as the bottom clarinetist in band. Due to this low chair placement and a negative recommendation from his junior high school band director, Spring was placed only as an alternate, rather than a full-time member, in the Parkside High School marching band during his freshman year.

Spring did not experience many aesthetic musical moments during his high school musical education, largely due to his directors taking such a negative approach in their teachings. However, he does attribute the overall feeling of playing with a group as one of his important early memories, and as the reason he remained involved with music. Additionally, he admits that regardless of his early struggles, he simply liked to play, which is ultimately what kept him going. “If I hadn’t liked it, I would’ve given up a long time ago,” he states.

In 1972, when he was a senior in high school, Spring informed his father that he wanted to be a music teacher. Since his family lived only forty-five minutes from Ann Arbor, Michigan, his father called the School of Music at the University of Michigan, where he was transferred to Dr. John Mohler, Professor of Clarinet. Once it became clear to Mohler that Spring had not had private instruction, he said, "Well, I think you'd probably better come over and have him play for me, and see what he can do."

Spring, who at the time was playing on an old Selmer Signet clarinet with an HS\* mouthpiece, Mitchell Lurie reeds that he kept on a piece of glass wrapped in yarn, and a ligature that he had mistakenly put on backwards because he had not been told differently, arrived at his first clarinet lesson with John Mohler. After listening to Spring play for roughly one minute, Mohler suggested that he go down to a basement practice room and warm-up. "So, I went downstairs and I played a few notes... He said to play a couple of scales, and that's all I knew were a couple of scales, so I played those scales and came back up. He said, 'Bob, you're back already?'" recalls Spring. In preparation for his lesson, Spring had found the *Grand Duo Concertante* at a local music store, and attempted to play the third movement. Mohler's response was, "Wow, you're not very good!" He suggested that Spring study with a doctoral student at University of Michigan, but Spring desired study with Mohler, who agreed on a temporary basis. He recommended that Spring purchase Carl Baermann's *Third Method for Clarinet* and learn the C major exercises "at 60," all slurred. Spring, who did not own a metronome, nor know what "at 60" meant, practiced the exercises a couple of times over the next two weeks, and returned for his next lesson. Upon hearing him, Mohler commented, "Look, this isn't going to work. You don't understand." Spring remembers beginning to cry, and replied, "I don't understand. I don't understand what you want me to do. I really don't understand. Please, show me."

This began Robert Spring's tutelage with John Mohler. Each week, a forty-five minute lesson was taught for the rate of two dollars and fifty cents, and Mohler taught Spring how to practice. Spring remarks, "(My first lesson was) actually the last unprepared lesson I ever had, and I think that's one of

the main events that made me decide that I really wanted to become an educator. To realize that he changed my life by spending forty-five minutes with me instead of just saying, 'You're awful,' and 'Get out of here.' I thought it was pretty cool." Mohler's influence was so great, in fact, that Spring describes him as "shaping everything." "I wouldn't be able to do anything if it weren't for John," he says. Spring studied with John Mohler throughout the rest of high school, thoroughly enjoying his time and practicing diligently.

### Formal Education and Teaching Appointments

When the time came to apply for college, he applied only to the University of Michigan, not realizing that a student should apply to more than one school. Additionally, his father had attended University of Michigan, and it was expected that he carry on the legacy. Luckily, he was admitted, but was quickly put in his place once again when fall semester marching band auditions occurred, and he was placed fifty-fourth out of fifty-seven clarinets. Spring admits, "I was really humiliated by it, but I just kept practicing every day. John would give me stuff to do, and I just did what he said."

There were a large number of talented clarinetists in school with him at the time, and due to his low chair placement, Spring was embarrassed to have them hear him play. He practiced from 7:30-8:30 a.m. before most of them arrived in the music building; he practiced another session in the middle of the afternoon before marching band when most of the best students were in orchestra, and then practiced another hour in the evening after he completed his homework. He recalls practicing around three hours per day in total during his freshman year, and when the same marching band audition occurred the following year, he earned first chair.

Spring describes the ensemble experience at the University of Michigan as influential, citing not only some early disappointments with the Symphony Band and its performance quality, but especially

his time under the baton of H. Robert Reynolds, who began his tenure at the school during Spring's junior year. Coming from an early musical experience of directors who felt that yelling at students was the only way to get results, Reynolds' calm, professional demeanor was an enormous influence. Spring recalls, "Bob refused to yell. He said, 'Animosity does not make good music.' We would have these rehearsals, and what he did that was so amazing was that there wasn't any yelling. He'd stop and say, 'I'm disappointed. I thought we could get further. I know that this process is going to take a few years, but I'm not going to yell at you. You're going to have to learn this.' And I just thought, 'Wow!'"

One of Spring's favorite memories of playing in H. Robert Reynolds' ensemble was their last concert together in what has now become Orchestra Hall in Detroit. At the time, the Detroit Symphony played in a downtown Detroit theatre called Ford Auditorium, and it lacked optimal acoustics. The old Orchestra Hall had become a movie house, and next became the Paradise Theatre, showing adult films. The decision had been made to tear down the Paradise Theatre and replace it with a Gino's Pizza, but one of the chairman of Gino's Pizza, who was also on the board of the Detroit Symphony, walked in to view the property, and he realized that it was the old Orchestra Hall. The original chandelier was still hanging from the ceiling, but the walls were rotted out. As a fundraiser, the University of Michigan Wind Ensemble under the direction of Reynolds gave a concert to help restore the theatre to a condition suitable for a world-class orchestra.

Spring began his master's degree in Wind Instrument Performance at the University of Michigan immediately after he completed his undergraduate degree in 1977. For his degree requirements, he studied all of the woodwind instruments, taking saxophone lessons with Donald Sinta, bassoon lessons with Hugh Cooper, oboe lessons with Arno Mariotti, and flute lessons with a teaching assistant. John Mohler went on sabbatical, and so Spring had the opportunity to study clarinet with David Shifrin. Although Mohler returned during the second year of Spring's master's degree, he chose to stay in Shifrin's clarinet studio. He describes Shifrin as an amazing teacher and player with whom he had a

good experience. “If you did things John’s way, it always worked, but he liked to teach a certain way, and he didn’t like you to break away from that. David, on the other hand, just said, ‘Try this, try anything, you’re boring me.’”

Upon completing his master’s degree in 1978 and leaving the University of Michigan, Spring felt unprepared for work. While his undergraduate degree was in music education, his student teaching experience was less than ideal, not providing him with mentors or feedback, nor information on applying for teaching jobs post-graduation. He auditioned for a few open orchestral jobs, but felt unprepared for those as well, so he ended up working at Frost Junior High School with his own former junior high band director, while maintaining a private studio. Additionally, he became a part-time clarinet instructor at Albion College, a small Methodist school in Lower Michigan. It was during this time that he realized without doubt that he did not want to be a junior high band director, and he began exploring other options.

In 1979, Spring got a job at a small private school called Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa as the Instructor of Clarinet and the Director of Marching and Concert Bands. He was originally told that there would be 96 people in the band, however, there were only 48 when he arrived, so Spring began recruiting heavily. Since this position was only a one-year appointment, he continuously applied for other open positions around the country. However, the students petitioned the president that the original professor not be allowed to return, and Spring was asked to stay at Morningside.

After a few years working in his tenure track position at Morningside College, the dean of the school prompted Spring to begin working on his doctorate so that he may be considered for tenure when the time arrived. Having always wanted to study with Robert Marcellus, Spring auditioned for and was accepted at Northwestern University. Three weeks before he was supposed to begin, however, he had not yet received any information from the school. Upon investigation, he learned that no clarinetist



had ever completed a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Clarinet from Northwestern; all of the students at the time were being held back for various reasons. This information, along with the fact that he would not be able to study with Marcellus until his second year, caused Spring to change his mind.

Spring called his former teacher, John Mohler, for advice on the matter. As they sat in Mohler's front room drinking iced tea, he informed Spring that he was welcome to come back to the University of Michigan if he didn't mind obtaining three degrees from one place. Since Mohler was such an influence on Spring's life, he happily agreed and began studying with him once again that summer. He describes it as being a completely different experience than he had had as an undergraduate student. Spring, who had been diligently practicing over the three year span since he completed his master's degree, said, "It was an amazing experience; he let me do a lot. They were also winding down their summer program, and the nice thing was that I had theory classes with only about three or four people, so I got a chance in theory and history classes to really understand the material." He completed his Doctor of Musical Arts in Clarinet Performance in 1987.

After his tenure at Morningside College, and while still working on his doctoral studies, Spring earned his first position teaching only clarinet at West Texas University in 1985. The description of the job required him to play in the faculty woodwind quintet and the Amarillo Symphony in addition to his clarinet teaching duties. However, when he arrived in Texas, the clarinetist of the Amarillo Symphony refused to leave, and the woodwind quintet was incomplete. This left Spring in the small town of Canyon, Texas with no playing opportunities except the ones that he could create himself.

In 1988, Spring won the position at Arizona State University as an instructor of clarinet and chamber music, where he currently remains as Professor of Music.

## Early Influences in Music Performance and Teaching Philosophies

In the 1960s and 1970s, classic rock music was prominent in Robert Spring's life. Even though he grew up hearing swing band and classical music in his home, Motown and the Detroit rock scene was a strong force in his artistic life. His first rock concert attendance was in 1969 at the age of fourteen, when his parents drove him to see Jimi Hendrix at Cobo Arena in Detroit, and two weeks later he saw Led Zeppelin at the Grand Ballroom in Detroit. While in high school, singer-songwriter Bob Seger played his high school dances. As it was the common thing to do at the time, he recalls having his own band which was called "Sandlewood Incense," where he played his Gibson Les Paul guitar with his Fender Bandmaster amplifier.

Spring still listens to rock music in his adult life, and feels that popular music, in addition to classical music, has provided an enormous aesthetic experience for him as a musician. Observing the ways that audience members react to both genres has shaped his musical choices and performance choices. "It all had an influence because the thing that I couldn't figure out was that I'd go to symphony concerts and everybody was like this [sitting very straight, stiff, and proper] for an hour pretending like they enjoy it. Then you'd go to hear Led Zeppelin, and everyone was singing along, and the amount of energy and connection with the audience was something that really was incredible to me. I thought, 'How can you connect like that, and how come orchestras can't connect like that? Or bands, or anything?'"

This attraction to branching out of the classical realm and connecting to an audience in a different way impacted the kinds of pieces that Spring began to choose as a young musician. The University of Michigan and the surrounding areas gravitated toward more conservative styles while he was working on his degrees, and he began to try to get involved with new music. The first piece of classical 'new music' that he purchased was *Variants* by William O. Smith, and he was amazed by what

was being asked of the clarinetist. “I remember working on it, and my eyes and my world just changed because I didn’t know you could do these things,” he recalls. Spring attributes his style of playing and what he did with new music as coming from trying to emulate the sounds he heard from classic rock guitarists, which gave him freedom on the clarinet to explore different colors and gestures.

Spring attributes John Mohler and H. Robert Reynolds with influencing his teaching style, in addition to experiencing negative teaching from past band directors in his youth. He describes the experience that Mohler provided to his students as that of a “caring teacher on a basic level, and he taught you everything that you needed to know. He came to every recital, he came to every band concert. Not only did he treat you like you were his student, but he also made you feel like you were really important to him.” Additionally, he cites Mohler’s way of prompting his students to work, which was much like Reynolds’, who never took a negative or demeaning approach.

### The Beginning and Development of Playing Contemporary Music

Spring’s journey into exploring contemporary music began with John Mohler’s own experimentation with the genre. Spring recalls Mohler, who had never played a piece with a multiphonic, working on Alexander Obradovich’s *Micro Sonata* during his freshman year, and constantly playing bits and pieces for his students during their lessons. He was inspired by Mohler’s willingness to step outside of his comfort zone, and he was encouraged to experiment and open up musically as well.

During Spring’s first year of teaching public school, he was also a member of the Detroit Civic Orchestra, a training orchestra of the Detroit Symphony. The ensemble rehearsed in an old building in downtown Detroit that belonged to the J. L. Hudson Company. When a piece that didn’t include a clarinet part was being rehearsed, Spring would go off and practice, and he recalls acquiring many of his first contemporary pieces during this time. “There were two pieces that turned my life around. One

was Bill Smith's piece, *Variants for solo clarinet*. The other was a piece by Ronald Caravan called *Excursions for A Clarinet*. I just couldn't believe the sounds, and I thought at the time that you were able to express yourself without the rigid aspects of time and pitch, which are of paramount importance in classical music. I think that's why I became interested in doing it. The other one was actually out of necessity. Particularly during my doctoral studies with John Mohler, if I brought in Brahms or Devienne or Mozart or something like that, he just tore me apart. You had to do it exactly the way he wanted it. But if I brought in some new piece, he didn't know it, so I could just play!"

While Spring lived in Iowa and worked at Morningside College, he visited a store across the river in South Sioux City, Nebraska called Jay's Music, which was owned by an old band director named Jay Wicker. His inventory consisted mostly of music for band and orchestra, and the solo repertoire that he sold was primarily contest pieces for students. At that time, publishing companies would sell the standard literature at a cheaper rate if a retailer would also buy the contemporary music that they were trying to get rid of. When Wicker would receive contemporary clarinet music, he placed it in an old Coors beer box where he placed a sign that read, "Bob's Bin," and he called Spring when it was full. From that bin, Spring acquired Joan Tower's *Wings* and Morton Subotnick's *Passages of the Beast*, among many other works.

Another factor that led to Spring's involvement with performing contemporary music was the necessity of recruitment while at Morningside College. As a twenty-four year old clarinet teacher at a small college, he realized that he would never become known by band directors and potential students if he played the same literature that everyone else played. "I started experimenting because I found that contemporary music, I realized I could do it, and I liked it. People started to get to know me because of it, and I started getting students. It was kind of 'necessity is the mother of invention.' I needed to get students, teaching at this little Methodist school in the middle of nowhere, and I had to figure out some way to get band directors to notice me and have their students check it out."

Spring, who is widely known for his double and triple tonguing techniques, learned that skill out of necessity as well, while preparing Subotnick's *Passages of the Beast*, an early clarinet and electronics piece. The work itself requires the clarinetist to use a pickup and plug into a box that contained a computer chip that could manipulate the clarinetist's sounds during performance. This box, called a "ghost box" in the score, was an early attempt at a MIDI instrument, taking the clarinet sounds and converting acoustical signals into MIDI signals. Ultimately, since the piece ran on a timer in conjunction with the use of the ghost box, the performer had to tongue sixteenth notes at quarter note = 184. Upon realizing this, Spring called his brother, who is a trumpet player, and got advice on how to double tongue in order to successfully play the piece.

Another extended technique that Spring learned out of necessity was circular breathing<sup>73</sup>. Joan Tower was auditioning clarinetists to create the premiere recordings of some of her works, and Spring received her permission to make the recording. "I opened up the music and I looked at it, and I'm shaking. It was manuscript at that point, the *Concerto* was, and so I looked at it, and there was no place to breathe in the first two pages. So, I called her up, and I said, 'Joan, this is Bob Spring, and I got the music, thank you.' She wouldn't let me record it for nine months; she said it would take that long to learn, which it did. I said, 'There's no place to breathe in the first two pages,' and she said, 'Well, you do circular breathe, don't you?' I said, 'Yeah, yeah, I just didn't know what you wanted me to do.' I hung up, and my wife said, 'What's wrong?' and I said, 'I have nine months to learn how to circular breathe!'"

The first occasion that Spring was widely recognized for his exceptional performances of contemporary music was in 1988, shortly after his appointment at Arizona State University. The International Clarinet Association's annual convention, ClarinetFest, was being held in Richmond, Virginia by host, Chuck West. West called Spring to perform at the convention when a last minute

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<sup>73</sup> Circular breathing is a technique used by some wind instrument players to produce a continuous tone during performance. It is accomplished by simultaneously breathing in through the nose while pushing air stored in the cheeks out through the mouth.

cancellation by a previously scheduled performer occurred, and Spring obliged with a performance of Russell Riepe's *Three Studies on Flight*, which contained a great amount of double tonguing. That performance, which was witnessed by clarinetists from around the world, partially marked the beginning of Spring's reputation on a wider scale.

### Dragon's Tongue

In 1994, Robert Spring's compact disc recording *Dragon's Tongue* was released by Summit Records. A compilation of arrangements for solo clarinet and wind band, it was originally intended to be a gift from Spring to John Mohler, who had just retired from the University of Michigan. Mohler had given Spring a box full of music for clarinet and band, and Spring decided to record it for him.

Spring had already become recognized at Arizona State University with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee*, which is included on *Dragon's Tongue*. While the piece is usually slurred, he practiced double tonguing the piece as part of his daily warmup, which gained the attention of his esteemed colleague, Doc Severinsen. "I was practicing, and all of a sudden the door just flung open, and it was Doc Severinsen standing there, and he started swearing at me. I said, 'What's wrong?' and he said, 'I can't even do that!' So, I think that's why I decided to do it."

Spring's performances of multiple tonguing techniques, circular breathing, and extended range on *Dragon's Tongue* was described by Frank Kowalsky, in a letter for Spring, as changing the way that composers write for the clarinet. Theoretically, the expectations of a musician playing the clarinet had been raised; due to Spring's recordings, these virtuosic techniques were a known possibility. Spring states of the project, "I actually didn't think it was going to change anything. It was just a present to John; it was my present to him. Once we got done with it, John and I went to dinner with the recording engineer, and John said, 'You know, this is going to change everything.' I said, 'No, it's not going to

change anything.’ He said, ‘Nobody has ever done anything like this. It’s going to change everything.’ And then he said the funniest thing. He said, ‘The only problem is that you’re going to have to play these live.’ I said, ‘I can do that!’ and he said, ‘No you can’t, it just took you two hours to get through one!’ I was very fortunate to be there.”

### Commissions

A multitude of works have been commissioned by Robert Spring for clarinet and percussion, which largely occurred as a result of Spring’s teaching position at West Texas University and his lack of playing opportunities in Canyon, Texas. He befriended Susan Martin, the percussion teacher at West Texas University, who suggested to Spring, “You know, I think there are some clarinet and percussion pieces. Do you want to read through them?” From there, the two musicians branched out into requesting different composers to write pieces for them. Spring recalls that at the beginning of the process, they commissioned any composer who would agree to write for them, and as time progressed and they became good friends with more composers, the commissions occurred as a result of these friendships. Susan Martin and Robert Spring played together throughout his time in Texas, and when Spring won the position at Arizona State University, he began performing with percussionist J.B. Smith, who also taught at the university. The two men developed a friendship through working together, and Spring approached him, describing what he and Martin had started to do, and they have been playing together every year since that time.

In addition to his commissions, Spring has been approached over the years by composers who have desired to write for him as well. One such composer is Peter Schickele, also known as P.D.Q. Bach, whom Spring met while performing with the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio, of which he was a member for eighteen years. The conductor of the orchestra, who enjoyed commissioning

works himself, had employed Schickele in the past to write a piece for the ensemble, and while Schickele was in town, the conductor invited him to lunch, along with Spring. During lunch, Spring told Schickele of some of his recordings, and Schickele expressed the desire to hear them. Spring delivered *Dragon's Tongue*, *Tarantelle*, and the Joan Tower recordings to the Crowne Plaza Hotel for him the next day, and they spurred Schickele into writing a clarinet concerto. "He took elements of what I could do and put them into it. There's a big double tonguing section, there's a big circular breathing section, and that was really fun to work with him."

### Leaving a Legacy

When it comes to summing up his career so far, Spring describes himself as a lucky individual who was in the right place at the right time, and who was driven by disappointments to a certain degree. For example, his disappointment with not obtaining a collegiate clarinet job immediately after the completion of his master's degree, and instead working as a band director for seven years, inspired Spring to practice diligently in order to move to the next level in his career. Working at West Texas University without the availability of an orchestra position forced him to find a new genre in clarinet and percussion duos, which inspired the beginning of his body of commissions. Upon arrival at his Arizona State University position, he quickly learned that there were only seven clarinet students, which forced him to hone his recruiting skills and become even more active in performing contemporary music in order to gain a larger audience. By the beginning of his second year at Arizona State University, he had increased the studio size to 29 members.

Robert Spring, more than any of other element of his career, wishes to extend to his past, present, and future students that he supports them and cares for them. He enjoys attending their performances, whether they are band concerts at Arizona State University or solo engagements at



international conferences. He attempts to be there for every one of these performances in order to support his students in their endeavors, to strengthen the teacher-student relationship, and to better himself as their teacher. Additionally, he feels that when a person has an ability or talent, it should be passed on and shared as much as possible. “Everybody wants to live forever, but we as teachers live on through our students. That’s how we extend our humanity to others.”

## Chapter 4

### **Compositions Written for Robert Spring**

Robert Spring began commissioning works for the clarinet in the late 1980s, greatly adding to the body of contemporary literature for the instrument. Whether the works were written for solo clarinet, clarinet and piano, a chamber group, or clarinet with a large ensemble, every piece of music was commissioned either solely or in part by Spring, and each composer knew of his technical and musical abilities when writing for him.

This chapter contains a list of works commissioned by Robert Spring, provided by Spring via e-mail correspondence. The works are alphabetized by composer, and then arranged by the year of publication and the title of the piece. Unless otherwise noted, each premiere was given by Robert Spring, and when additional information is known, the premiere date and details are given.

**Composer:** Albaugh, Michael

**Title:** *Rock – o – Rolla*

**Year of Publication:** 2012

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** Summer of 2012 - Interlochen Center for the Arts, Interlochen, Michigan.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Composer:** Aschaffenburg, Walter

**Title:** *Parings for Clarinet and Piano*

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano

**Composer:** David, James M.

**Title:** *Concerto for Clarinet "Auto 66"*

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, wind  
ensemble

**Commissioned by:** Consortium of Universities, with their clarinet professors, including Arizona State University with Robert Spring.

**Composer:** DeMars, James

**Title:** *Magic Passes*, duo concerto for clarinet, piano, and band

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano, and  
band

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** November 9, 2011 - the China Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China by Robert Spring, Xi Your, and the Peoples Liberation Army Band.<sup>74</sup>

**Composer:** Etezady, Roshanne

**Title:** *Bright Angel for clarinet and piano*

**Year of Publication:** 2007

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Instrumentation:** clarinet and piano

**Commissioned by:** Consortium of Universities, including Arizona State University with Robert Spring

**Composer:** Etezady, Roshanne

**Title:** *Glint for clarinet and saxophone*

**Year of Publication:** 2007

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and saxophone

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, saxophone

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2007 – National Concert Hall, Beijing, China by Robert Spring and Timothy McAllister

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<sup>74</sup> James DeMars, composer, "Magic Passes," accessed December 27, 2017.  
<http://www.jamesdemars.net/12m.html>.

**Composer:** Etezady, Roshanne

**Title:** *Siren for two clarinets*

**Year of Publication:** 2008

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2008 – International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri by Robert Spring with Jana Starling

**Composer:** Etezady, Roshanne

**Title:** *Speak of the Devil*

**Year of Publication:** 2008

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2008 – International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri by Robert Spring with Jana Starling

**Composer:** Etezady, Roshanne

**Title:** *Wake the Dead*

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets and string quartet

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, string quartet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2011 – International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest, Los Angeles, California

**Composer:** Garrop, Stacy

**Title:** *Frammenti – Five Miniatures for Chamber Ensemble*

**Publisher:** Theodore Presser Company

**Year of Publication:** 2009

**Genre:** chamber music: mixed ensemble

**Instrumentation:** flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, double bass, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring, the Rembrandt Chamber Players, the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival, Peggy Person, Richard Nunemaker, and Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society of Wisconsin, Inc.

**Premiere:** 2010, in Chicago, Illinois by the Rembrandt Chamber Players

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Garrop, Stacy  
**Title:** *Stubborn as Hell for two clarinets*  
**Year of Publication:** 2011  
**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets  
**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring  
**Premiere:** September 18, 2011, Arizona State University faculty recital by Robert Spring and Joshua Gardner  
**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Theodore Presser Company

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Composer:** Goddaer, Norbert  
**Title:** *Paganinesque for solo clarinet and clarinet choir*  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Genre:** clarinet solo with clarinet choir  
**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring  
**Premiere:** 1997 – International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest, Lubbock, Texas

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, clarinet choir

**Composer:** Goddaer, Norbert  
**Title:** *Conversations for two Bb clarinets*  
**Year of Publication:** 2010  
**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets  
**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Composer:** Goddear, Norbert  
**Title:** *Sonata for clarinet and percussion*  
**Year of Publication:** 1997  
**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion  
**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring  
**Premiere:** 1997 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital with J.B. Smith

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion

**Composer:** Goddear, Norbert

**Title:** *California for two Bb clarinets and string quartet*

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets and string quartet

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, string quartet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2011 – Ostend, Belgium

**Composer:** Gudaitis, Amber

**Title:** *Apparition for clarinet, two percussionists, dancer, and lighting*

**Year of Publication:** 2014

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, two percussionists, dancer

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2014 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Composer:** Hackbarth, Glenn

**Title:** *Points in the Sky*

**Year of Publication:** 1994

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet, percussion with electronics

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion, computer controlled electronics

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** March 26, 1994 in the Music Theatre at the Arizona State University School of Music by Robert Spring and J.B. Smith

**Composer:** Hackbarth, Glenn

**Title:** *Flux for two clarinets and electronic sounds*

**Year of Publication:** 2010

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinet and electronics

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, electronics

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2010 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri by Robert Spring with Joshua Gardner

**Composer:** Jahn, Grant

**Title:** *Pulse for Clarinet Choir*

**Year of Publication:** 2014

**Genre:** clarinet choir

**Instrumentation:** clarinet in Eb, 5  
clarinets in Bb, 3 bass clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2016 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Lawrence, Kansas by the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir

**Composer:** Kocour, Michael

**Title:** *Oncoming Traffic*

**Year of Publication:** 2006

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, marimba,  
jazz piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2006 – Arizona State University by Robert Spring and J.B. Smith

**Composer:** Koyle, Gregg

**Title:** *Kumbengo for Two, for clarinet and marimba*

**Year of Publication:** 1987

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Publisher:** HoneyRock Publishing

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, marimba

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 1987 – University of Michigan by Robert Spring and Susan Martin

**Composer:** LaFave, Kenneth

**Title:** *Echoes of New York*

**Year of Publication:** 1997

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 1997 – Arizona State University

**Composer:** Mandat, Eric

**Title:** *Sub(t)RainS O' Strata's Fears for solo Bb clarinet*

**Publisher:** Judy Green Music

**Year of Publication:** 1996

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 1996 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Paris, France

**Comments:** This is considered one of the most challenging works in the modern clarinet repertoire. More detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Mandat, Eric

**Title:** *3 for 2*

**Publisher:** Cirrus Music

**Year of Publication:** 2001, revised in 2002

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2001 – Arizona State University by Robert Spring and J.B. Smith

**Comments:** Written for clarinet and percussion duo Robert Spring and J.B. Smith. More detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Mandat, Eric

**Title:** *Bipolarang*

**Publisher:** Cirrus Music

**Year of Publication:** 2008

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2008 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri by Robert Spring and Jana Starling

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Moto Perpetuo*

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Year of Publication:** 2002

**Genre:** chamber music: woodwind trio

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, oboe, bassoon

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2002 – Arizona State University, concert for the new university president

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.



**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Solar Flair*

**Year of Publication:** 2004

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** September 2004, Robert Spring's faculty recital at Arizona State University, with clarinetist Jorge Montilla

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Riptide*

**Year of Publication:** 2009

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and bassoon

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** September 2009, Robert Spring's faculty recital at Arizona State University with bassoonist Albie Micklich

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, bassoon

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Live Wire*

**Year of Publication:** 2010

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2010 International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Kansas City, Missouri by Robert Spring and Jana Starling

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Pulse Break*

**Year of Publication:** 2012

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets and percussion

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** September 2012, Robert Spring's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Recital at Arizona State University, with clarinetist Joshua Gardner and percussionist J.B. Smith.

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets,  
percussion

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Postcards from Belgium*

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Year of Publication:** 2013

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Jonathan Aubrey, as a thank you to Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2013, at the Belgium Clarinet Academy

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Double Take*

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Year of Publication:** 2014

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, band

**Commissioned by:** University of Wisconsin Fox Valley

**Premiere:** 2014 - performed by Robert Spring and Theresa Martin in Appleton, Wisconsin

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Recombobulation*

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Year of Publication:** 2016

**Genre:** clarinet choir

**Instrumentation:** clarinet choir

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring and the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir

**Premiere:** 2016 International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Lawrence, Kansas by the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Martin, Theresa

**Title:** *Altitude*

**Year of Publication:** 2017

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2017 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** McAllister, Scott

**Title:** *Freebirds for Two Clarinets and Band; Freebirds for Two Clarinets and Orchestra*

**Year of Publication:** 2007

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets and  
band/orchestra

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring and Arizona State University

**Premiere:** Version for Band: 2007 - Robert Spring and clarinetist Joshua Gardner at Disney Hall in Los Angeles, California

Version for Orchestra: Robert Spring and Julia Heinen, Los Angeles, California

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Mead, Andrew

**Title:** *Chamber Concerto for clarinet, violin, viola,  
cello, marimba, and piano*

**Year of Publication:** 2007

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion with strings

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, violin, viola,  
cello, marimba, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2007 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Composer:** Montano, Damian

**Title:** *Double Concerto for clarinet, bassoon, and orchestra;  
Double Concerto for clarinet, bassoon, and band*

**Year of Publication:** 2008

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, bassoon,  
band/orchestra

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring and Albie Micklich

**Premiere:** Version for orchestra: 2008 - world premiere at the International Double Reed Society conference in Provo, Utah by Robert Spring and Albie Micklich

Version for band: 2012 – Arizona State University by Robert Spring and Albie Micklich

**Composer:** Moon, Barry

**Title:** *Three Gifts for two clarinets, percussion, and computer controlled audio and video*

**Year of Publication:** 2013

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets, percussion, electronics      **Instrumentation:** two clarinets, percussion, electronics

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2013, International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Assisi, Italy by Robert Spring, clarinetist Joshua Gardner, and percussionist J.B. Smith

**Composer:** Nelson, Joseph

**Title:** *Sonata for Clarinet and Marimba*

**Year of Publication:** 1987

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 1987 – West Texas State University by Robert Spring and Susan Martin

**Composer:** Plamondon, Taran

**Title:** *Goose on the Loose, Theme and Variation for Five Musicians*

**Year of Publication:** 2016

**Genre:** chamber music: mixed ensemble

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, horn, two percussionists, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2016 – Arizona State University

**Composer:** Prince, Whitney

**Title:** *Dry Heat for solo clarinet*

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Year of Publication:** 2003

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2003 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Prince, Whitney

**Title:** *Spin for two clarinets*

**Year of Publication:** 2010

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2010 International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest by Robert Spring and clarinetist Jana Starling

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Composer:** Prince, Whitney

**Title:** *Shaman for solo clarinet and percussion ensemble*

**Year of Publication:** 2012

**Genre:** clarinet and percussion ensemble

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2012 – Arizona State University

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion ensemble

**Composer:** Prince, Whitney

**Title:** *Five for 25 for solo clarinet and solo percussion*

**Year of Publication:** 2017

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and percussion

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion

**Commissioned by:** the students of Robert Spring in celebration of his twenty-five years at Arizona State University

**Premiere:** 2017 – Arizona State University by Robert Spring and percussionist J.B. Smith

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Rockmaker, Jody

**Title:** *Spring Fever for Clarinet and Piano*

**Year of Publication:** 1998

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** September 1998 - Robert Spring and pianist Eckert Sellheim, Tempe, Arizona

**Composer:** Rogers, Rodney

**Title:** *Voices Rising*

**Year of Publication:** 2000

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2000 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Rogers, Rodney

**Title:** *Gargoyles and Zen Journey for two clarinets and string quartet*

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets and string quartet

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, string quartet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2011 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Los Angeles, California

**Composer:** Rogers, Rodney

**Title:** *Igor's Ladder for two clarinets*

**Year of Publication:** 2015

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2008 - International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri

**Composer:** Rogers, Rodney

**Title:** *Fibonacci's Spiral for flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, string bass, and percussion*

**Year of Publication:** 2017

**Genre:** chamber music: mixed ensemble

**Instrumentation:** flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, string bass, percussion

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring, in dedication to the woodwind faculty at Arizona State University

**Premiere:** 2017 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Composer:** Schickele, Peter

**Title:** *Concerto for Clarinet*

**Publisher:** Theodore Presser Company

**Year of Publication:** 2003

**Genre:** concerto

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, orchestra

**Commissioned by:** ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, for Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2003 – Robert Spring and the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, Columbus, Ohio

**Comments:** Detailed comments are included in Chapter Five of this document.

**Composer:** Schickele, Peter

**Title:** *Six Studies for clarinet and bassoon*

**Publisher:** Theodore Presser Company

**Year of Publication:** 2012

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and bassoon

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, bassoon

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2012 – ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, Columbus, Ohio (performed within the concert)

**Composer:** Schoenfeld, Paul

**Title:** *Klezmer Sonatina No. 2 for clarinet and piano*

**Year of Publication:** 2014

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano

**Commissioned by:** Clarinet Commission Collective, a project to help individual clarinetists pool their resources to commission works from major composers

**Composer:** Schultz, Mark

**Title:** *Ashfall for clarinet, horn and two percussions*

**Year of Publication:** 1995

**Genre:** chamber music: mixed ensemble

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, horn, two percussionists

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring and Thomas Bacon

**Premiere:** 1995 - International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Tempe, Arizona

**Composer:** Schultz, Mark

**Title:** *Of Shadow and Fire for clarinet and piano*

**Year of Publication:** 2004

**Genre:** clarinet and piano

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2004 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Tokyo, Japan

**Composer:** Schultz, Mark

**Title:** *Ring of Fire for clarinet, horn, percussion, and piano*

**Year of Publication:** 2004

**Genre:** chamber music: mixed ensemble

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, horn,  
percussion, piano

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2004 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Composer:** Sellers, Joey

**Title:** *Apéritif, Tale, Digression and Entrée for Tuba and Clarinet*

**Year of Publication:** 1996

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet and tuba

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, tuba

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 1996 – Arizona State University Faculty Recital

**Composer:** Six, Bert – arranger; Cohn, James - composer

**Title:** *Variations on The Wayfaring Stranger*

**Year of Publication:** 2010

**Genre:** clarinet choir

**Instrumentation:** clarinet choir

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2016 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Lawrence, Kansas by the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir



**Composer:** Six, Guido

**Title:** *Springtime "The Olympics" for Bb Clarinet Solo and Clarinet Choir*

**Year of Publication:** 2003

**Genre:** clarinet solo with clarinet choir

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, clarinet choir

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2003 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Composer:** J.B. Smith

**Title:** *In Light of Three for Clarinet, Percussion, and Tape or Clarinet and Tape*

**Publisher:** Alan Publications

**Year of Publication:** 2004

**Genre:** chamber music: clarinet, percussion, electronics

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, percussion, electronics

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2004 – Arizona State University by Robert Spring and percussionist J.B. Smith

**Composer:** Smith, William O.

**Title:** *Epigrams for solo clarinet*

**Year of Publication:** 2009

**Genre:** unaccompanied clarinet

**Instrumentation:** clarinet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2009 – Arizona State University

**Composer:** Smith, William O.

**Title:** *Four Duets for Four Demi-Clarinets*

**Year of Publication:** 2009

**Genre:** chamber music: two clarinets

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2009 – International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest, Kansas City, Missouri

**Composer:** Taylor, Noah

**Title:** *Concerto for Clarinet and Bass Clarinet*

**Year of Publication:** 2014

**Genre:** concerto

**Publisher:** Potenza Music

**Instrumentation:** clarinet, bass clarinet,  
band/orchestra

**Commissioned by:** Potenza Music Publications Consortium and Robert Spring

**Premiere:** 2014 - International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Baton Rouge, Louisiana by Robert Spring and bass clarinetist Matthew Miracle

**Composer:** Watte, Bart

**Title:** *Three Preludes for two Bb clarinets and string quartet*

**Year of Publication:** 2011

**Genre:** chamber music

**Instrumentation:** two clarinets, string  
quartet

**Commissioned by:** Robert Spring and Eddy Vanoosthuyse

**Premiere:** 2011 International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Los Angeles, California by Robert Spring and Eddy Vanoosthuyse

## Chapter 5

### **Composers' Styles and the Influence of Robert Spring**

As described within Chapter Two of this document, "Background of Composer/Clarinetist Relationships, and the Resulting Compositions and Changes to Clarinet Literature," the evolution of the works written for the clarinet has been influenced greatly by performing artists of the age. This has been achieved by (1) the observation and understanding of certain clarinetists' excellent technique and tone, which then pushed composers to increase the difficulty of their writing and to broaden the scope of technical and musical possibilities, and (2) by knowing the clarinetist's personality, which allowed the composers to add more character and musical appeal to their writing.

While composers throughout the second half of the twentieth century had been increasingly experimenting with extended techniques within their compositions, which can be seen particularly within the works of William O. Smith, Luciano Berio, and Eric Mandat, and clarinetists were beginning to employ them with greater ease, there was not a plethora of multiple sonorities, multiple tonguing, and extended range written throughout clarinet literature. In fact, the maximum performance expectations of clarinetists were not as extensive as they were once Robert Spring became more widely known as a performer. For instance, in his 2005 dissertation entitled "A Catalog of Compositions for Unaccompanied Clarinet Between 1978 and 1982, with an Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works," David H. Odom describes Luciano Berio's *Sequenza IX, per clarinetto solo*, which was written in 1980 as part of a series of *Sequenzas* that he created to show new and extended techniques as well as virtuosic playing for a variety of unaccompanied performers, as using clarinet extended techniques in a manner that was "conservative." He also remarked that the traditional technique within the piece required an extremely advanced player, and that the *Sequenza IX* utilized the "full range" of the clarinet at the time,

which extended to A6.<sup>75</sup> Philip Rehfeldt described circular breathing, a technique for which Robert Spring is well-known, particularly after the release of his CD *Dragon's Tongue* in 1994, as working fairly well in the lower register of the soprano clarinet, but that “although a few players have mastered it (playing in the upper register), it probably should be considered ‘advanced.’”<sup>76</sup> Rehfeldt describes multiple articulations in his 1994 edition as well, citing double and triple tonguing as “commonplace on the flute and rapidly becoming common, particularly double tonguing, on the oboe and bassoon,”<sup>77</sup> but admits that it “has been mastered by only relatively few clarinet and saxophone players.”<sup>78</sup> He additionally mentions that double tonguing is best in the low register of the soprano clarinet, and that it is achievable only to approximately a C5.

Throughout Robert Spring's career, while earning his degrees, teaching at universities, giving master classes, and performing around the world, he has had the opportunity to develop friendships with many prominent composers. For the purposes of illustrating some of the specific influence that Spring has had on contemporary compositional output, eight of these composers have been researched through studying their own writings and interviews they have given, and through personal e-mail correspondence. These well-known composers chosen for discussion in this chapter have written a commissioned piece for Dr. Spring, and in some cases, they have written many. Some of them are also clarinetists, having written several works for their instrument prior to connecting with Spring, and for others, he is the first clarinetist for whom they have written. They all have in common a knowledge of Robert Spring's performance abilities and of his personality, and they have remarked in interviews how these factors influenced their style of writing for the clarinet.

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<sup>75</sup> David H. Odom, “A Catalog of Compositions for Unaccompanied Clarinet Published Between 1978 and 1982, with an Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works,” (Dissertation. The Florida State University College of Music. 2005), 34.

<sup>76</sup> Rehfeldt, *New Directions in Clarinet*, 81.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

## Stacy Garrop

Stacy Garrop is currently the composer-in-residence of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, sponsored by New Music USA and the League of American Orchestras' Music Alive 2016-2019 residence program. Formerly a full-time composition professor at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University from 2000-2016, she has received awards including a Fromm Music Foundation Grant, Raymond and Beverly Sackler Music Composition Prize, three Barlow Endowment commissions, and has won numerous competitions. Dr. Garrop is a Cedille Records recording artist and has works on nine of their CDs, as well as pieces on ten additional record labels. She is widely commissioned, writing for the Albany Symphony, Capitol Saxophone Quartet, Carthage College Wind Ensemble, Chanticleer, Chicago a cappella, Gaudete Brass Quintet, San Francisco Choral Society, and Volti, a twenty person professional vocal ensemble based in San Francisco.

Garrop earned a B.M. at the University of Michigan, a M.A. at the University of Chicago, and a D.M. at Indiana University-Bloomington - all degrees in music composition. She describes her music as being centered on dramatic and lyrical storytelling. "The sharing of stories is a defining element of our humanity; we strive to share with others the experiences and concepts that we find compelling."<sup>79</sup>

Garrop first met Spring during his involvement with her piece *Frammenti* for mixed ensemble, for which he was a co-commissioner along with the Rembrandt Chamber Players in Chicago. Shortly after the Chicago premiere in 2010, Spring programmed the work for a recital at Arizona State University, and scheduled Garrop for events surrounding the concert. "Bob was a wonderful host – he had secured me a flight and hotel, he had gotten me in touch with the composition program so I could

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<sup>79</sup> Stacy Garrop, Composer, "Stacy Garrop – Short Biography," Inkjar Publishing Company, accessed December 26, 2017, <https://www.garrop.com/About/Biography/>.

give a seminar, and he drove me around as needed for activities. I was struck by his wonderful and wicked sense of humor,” says Garrop of her visit to Arizona and the beginning of her friendship with Spring.<sup>80</sup>

Prior to writing for Robert Spring, Stacy Garrop had incorporated the clarinet into many chamber and orchestral pieces, but had never written specifically for the instrument as a soloist. She had not had the chance to hear Spring perform, nor did she know him personally, while she was writing *Frammenti*, but when she was at Arizona State University for its performance, Spring gave her several of his recordings so that she could study in detail his abilities, and write the next piece accordingly.<sup>81</sup>

*Stubborn as Hell*, which Spring commissioned in 2011, was the first clarinet piece she had written. She wrote it as a duo, and it was premiered in recital at Arizona State University in the same year by Spring and Arizona State University faculty member Joshua Gardner. “Bob is one of those wondrous musicians that plays the most challenging pieces written for the instrument and makes them sound effortless. When he commissioned me, I wanted to write a piece that not only reflected his technical and musical abilities, but also his great sense of humor, hence the title and premise of the piece. The ‘stubbornness’ of the title refers to the manner in which the two instruments incessantly battle each other around the pitch D, and how they willfully get stuck repeating pitches and gestures.”<sup>82</sup>

Garrop explains that all of *Stubborn as Hell* was written with Spring’s technical ability in mind, especially the high range. “I’ve not heard many people who can play that high, and with that much flexibility up that high,”<sup>83</sup> she says of the work. Additionally, she had his personality in mind during her compositional process, utilizing her knowledge of his love of laughter to create the title of the piece and

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<sup>80</sup> Stacy Garrop, e-mail message to author, December 18, 2017.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

the concept of two clarinetists battling it out, which she felt may appeal to him.<sup>84</sup> Evidence of Garrop's specific compositional style for Robert Spring may be seen in Examples 1 and 2 on pages 62 and 63 of this text.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

58 *lyrical*  
*f* *mf*  
*f* *p* *mp* *p*

62  
*mp* *p* *mp* *p*

66  
*mp* *p* *mp*

69  
*p* *mp* *p* *mp*

73  
*f*

Example 1: Stacy Garrop, *Stubborn as Hell* for Two Bb Clarinets, mm. 58-76, printed with the permission of the publisher. The lyrical melody in the first clarinet part beginning at measure 59, which is written in the altissimo register, requires great control and finesse.



**Più mosso, insistent**

Example 2: Stacy Garrop, *Stubborn as Hell* for Two Bb Clarinets, 77-84, printed with the permission of the publisher. This section reflects the “stubbornness” of the two clarinetists willfully getting stuck on repeated gestures. The first clarinet part, which was written for Robert Spring, is centered around an altissimo G sharp and an altissimo A.

Garrop admits to being able to write very challenging clarinet parts when writing for Spring, particularly in the high range, and she does not write with the same level of difficulty for every clarinetist. “As a composer,” she states, “I am very aware of any commissioners’ abilities when I write a piece. So unless I’m writing a piece for a virtuoso performer, I tend to write a little more conservatively than I did in *Stubborn as Hell*.”<sup>85</sup>

Overall, Stacy Garrop believes that Robert Spring has been an enormous influence on clarinetists and composers alike. “Bob has been such a wonderful force in helping to develop virtuoso repertoire for the instrument – he has helped both clarinetists and composers further our understanding of the clarinet’s potential. I would hope that both Bob and the repertoire he’s helped to create would raise the

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

expectations for clarinetists and composers alike, similarly to what has happened with saxophonists and sax repertoire.”<sup>86</sup>

### Eric Mandat

Eric Mandat (b. 1957) is an internationally known composer and performer of contemporary clarinet music. His clarinet studies began with Richard Joiner of the Denver Symphony, and continued with Lee Gibson, Keith Wilson, D. Stanley Hasty, and Charles Neidich while he earned degrees from the University of North Texas (B.M.), the Yale School of Music (M.M.), and the Eastman School of Music (D.M.A.). Mandat is currently Professor of Music and Distinguished Scholar at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and has also taught as Visiting Professor of Music at Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University.

Mandat is a member of the Tone Road Ramblers, an eclectic sextet that performs experimental and improvised music, and performs frequently in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s MusicNOW Series. He tours the world as a soloist, chamber musician, and lecturer, of both new American clarinet music and traditional music, and he has premiered his own works at international conferences in Chicago, Stockholm, Tokyo, Vancouver, and Porto. Mandat’s compositions “utilize extended techniques within a framework largely influenced by jazz and traditional music of non-Western cultures.” Focusing primarily on solo and chamber works for clarinet, he composed many works employing the extended techniques for which he is famous before his first commission from Robert Spring.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Eric Mandat, “Eric Mandat Clarinetist/Composer,” revised on October 10, 2009, <http://www.ericmandat.com/?q=node/1>

Eric Mandat and Robert Spring first met when Mandat interviewed at West Texas State University<sup>88</sup> in the late 1980s, when Spring was leaving to work at Arizona State University. Mandat recalls:

We didn't have a lot of interactions during that visit, but we talked about new music, and about how we were both highly influenced by William O. Smith's *Variants*, and we vowed to stay in touch. We had good conversations about West Texas after the search process was over, and it started a thirty-year long friendship, which continues today. We share professional as well as personal aspects of our lives, and although we haven't called on each other in times of personal challenge, we both know the other person will be there and helpful for anything we might need. We have a very comfortable friendship, based on our mutual respect for each other, and our mutual interest in new music for clarinet and on optimizing rich and unique performance opportunities for our students.<sup>89</sup>

Robert Spring commissioned *Sub(t)Rains O' Strata's Fears for solo clarinet, 3 for 2 for clarinet and percussion*, and *Bipolarang* from Mandat. The first of these pieces, *Sub(t)Rains O' Strata's Fears*, began when the two men discussed the possibility of a commission during the ClarinetFest in Tempe, Arizona in 1995, and the composition was complete by 1996. Knowing Spring's personality and his performance abilities, the compositional process was enjoyable for Mandat. "I knew of his prowess with double tonguing, so a significant portion of the last section ("Strata's Fears") utilizes a lot of double tonguing. He didn't have specific compositional suggestions for me. I knew he wanted something technically challenging, and I was inspired to compose something that would also challenge me in a significant way."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> West Texas State University is now called Texas A&M University.

<sup>89</sup> Eric Mandat, e-mail to the author, January 5, 2018.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Handwritten musical score for solo clarinet, Example 3. The score consists of seven staves of music in 4/4 time. The notation includes various dynamics (f, mp, mf, cresc.), articulation (accents, slurs), and fingerings. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat). The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Example 3: Eric Mandat, *Sub(t)Rains O' Strata's Fears* for solo clarinet, pg. 18 of the score, printed with the permission of the composer. In this last section, which spans four pages in total, the tempo is marked quarter note = 138-152, creating the necessity to double tongue.

Spring and Mandat did not collaborate extensively on the commissions; instead, they discussed the mood and character of the works, as well as some of the formal organizational concepts. "Beyond

that, he took the ball and ran with it, which is what I prefer when others are working on my compositions,” explains Mandat. “I carefully notate the aspects of the music that I like for myself, particularly articulations; beyond that, it is always my hope that the performers will find their own way musically. Bob always infuses so much personality into every performance he undertakes, and I was well aware and appreciative of that when I was composing these works for him.”<sup>91</sup>

When commissioning *3 for 2* for Robert Spring and percussionist J. B. Smith, Mandat was asked for a piece that would “give them a workout.” Since this was the first piece he had written for percussion, he called upon was Carl Nielsen’s *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* for inspiration, which features a percussionist in duet with the clarinetist, and he loosely based his first movement, “Pruned Danish,” on that idea. “As was the case with *Sub(t)Rains*, I wanted to write a piece that both challenged Bob and J.B., and encouraged my own playing to grow in new ways. The final movement, “Outta My Way!”, was particularly physically difficult for both players, and both J.B. and I incurred some minor injuries as we worked up the last movement with our respective performance partners. Bob said he didn’t suffer any physical trauma from practicing the last movement, which didn’t surprise me, because I knew he practiced in general a lot more than I did, so he was physically stronger.”<sup>92</sup>

Eric Mandat reveals that when he composes for others, he generally has in his mind aspects of the performer’s personality. While writing for Spring, he uses “the strong sense of forward drive and good humor”<sup>93</sup> that he finds in his personality, which permeate both of his compositions for him.

Having been a prolific and successful composer and performer of clarinet music himself, Mandat’s outlook on writing for Robert Spring differs from many other composers. Whereas some may feel that it is an opportunity to compose a piece of music that is more difficult than what they have

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

previously written for the clarinet, or to write extended techniques that they have not yet attempted, Mandat sees it as a collaboration of extending overall possibilities. “My clarinet compositions have always been concerned with expanding the clarinet’s possibilities, and Bob’s mission as a performer has been the same, so it has been a natural merger for the two of us to collaborate on these composition projects.”<sup>94</sup>

When considering Robert Spring’s influence on other contemporary composers and performers, Mandat remarks, “Bob’s performance style, his energy, and his enthusiasm for sharing his new music discoveries with his many students have, in my opinion, had a profound influence on several generations of up and coming clarinetists, raising the bar of technical expectations for all clarinetists.”<sup>95</sup> While he admits to not being able to speak for other composers’ experiences composing for Spring, Mandat mentions, “I imagine, as has been my experience, that all of the other composers who have written for Bob recognize how liberating it is to have such a dedicated performer and teacher disseminating their music to new generations of emerging clarinetists.”<sup>96</sup>

### Theresa Martin

Theresa Martin (b. 1979) is a widely commissioned composer of solo, chamber, wind ensemble, and orchestral music. In addition to Robert Spring, some of the other musicians and organizations Dr. Martin has written for include tubaist Sam Pilafian, The Eufonix Quartet, oboist Michele Fiala, bassoonist Albie Micklich, as well as the Barnett Foundation of Chicago, the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, the Arizona Wind Symphony, and the University of Wisconsin Fox Valley Concert Band. She has been recognized by the American Composer’s Forum, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer’s

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

Competition, and the NACUSA Young Composer's Competition, and her pieces are frequently performed at international conferences. A student of both clarinet performance and composition, Dr. Martin earned her BFA at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, two master's degrees from Arizona State University, and her DMA in composition at the University of Michigan. Her clarinet teachers include Robert Spring, Deborah Chodacki, and William Helmers, and her composition mentors include Michael Daugherty, Evan Chambers, William Bolcom, Randall Shinn, and William Heinrichs.

Currently, Dr. Martin maintains a private studio in Wisconsin where she teaches composition, clarinet, and piano, and she additionally teaches as an adjunct professor at Lawrence University and the University of Wisconsin Fox Valley.<sup>97</sup>

Theresa Martin first saw Robert Spring perform at the International Clarinet Association's 1998 ClarinetFest in Columbus, Ohio while she was a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She had the opportunity to attend his lecture recital called "Clarathletics," which included Spring double tonguing and circular breathing *Flight of the Bumblebee*, and she admits that his playing left an impression on her mind when applying for graduate schools. "I was seeking a school that had both good composition and clarinet programs. The first time I met Bob was as a student at Arizona State University. I was intimidated at the first lesson, but Bob put me at ease with his bubbly personality,"<sup>98</sup> she recalls.

Martin describes her current relationship with Spring as a close friendship. "Bob is one of my favorite people," she says. "He has always been an advocate for my success musically, and he has been a great mentor to me over the years. We reconnect at every ClarinetFest I attend, and he flies me out to Tempe whenever he premieres one of my pieces, so we have kept in touch over the years."

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<sup>97</sup> Theresa Martin, Composer/Clarinetist, "With a passion for music," accessed January 2, 2018, <http://www.theresamartin.net/about/>.

<sup>98</sup> Theresa Martin, e-mail message to author, December 21, 2017.

Additionally, Martin fondly recalls the first time that Spring called her his ‘friend,’ which occurred at a doctoral recital of one of his Arizona State University students, on which *Solar Flair* was programmed. “I had just graduated with my master’s but was still living in Tempe, and had attended the recital. I was used to calling him Dr. Spring, and he said I could call him ‘Bob.’ It has been ‘Bob’ ever since.”<sup>99</sup>

Prior to composing for Robert Spring, Martin had written a few pieces for the clarinet, including *Autumn Art*, *Caricature*, and *Character Sketches*. The first commission for Spring came in 2002, when he requested an arrangement of *Moto Perpetuo* for clarinet, oboe, and bassoon, which he was going to play at the inaugural recital for the new president of Arizona State University. After the success of the first commission, eight more have followed.

*Solar Flair* was commissioned by Robert Spring in 2004, as a clarinet duet to play with his new faculty member, Jorge Montilla, at his faculty recital in September, 2004. Spring requested that it be a flashy opener for the recital, and since Martin had heard him play several times already, she was excited to write for such a virtuoso clarinetist. “I wrote the recurring melody in the first clarinet part with his gorgeous altissimo register in mind, and the continuous motion of sixteenth notes was inspired by his ability to circular breathe,”<sup>100</sup> she explains. She also attributes the sudden “flares” that interrupt the melody to Spring’s fiery personality, and mentions that the use of the spelling “flair” in the title was a “nod to the virtuosity of the performers.”<sup>101</sup> Specifically, Martin wrote measures 15-20, 35-40, 56-61, and 78-84 in this piece with Spring’s altissimo register in mind. “The recurring melody goes to a high A#; I was thinking of Bob’s sweet altissimo register and how lyrical and beautiful he can make it sound. Characteristically, the altissimo register can sound shrill and/or pinched, but I knew that Bob could make

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.



it beautiful. So, in a way, that stretches all of us clarinetists to ascend to his level of playing and improve our altissimo registers as well, especially if we want to play this piece.”<sup>102</sup>

The image displays a musical score for two clarinets, labeled Cl. 1 and Cl. 2. The score is for measures 15-20 of Theresa Martin's *Solar Flair*. Cl. 1's part features a melodic line in the altissimo register, marked 'sweetly', with notes including naturals, sharps, and naturals. Cl. 2's part consists of a more complex, lower-register line marked 'mp lightly', featuring many accidentals and slurs. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

**Example 4:** Theresa Martin, *Solar Flair*, mm. 15-20, printed with the permission of the composer. The first clarinet part in this section, which is marked at quarter note = 108, shows one instance of the lyrical writing in the altissimo register that Martin wrote for Robert Spring.

*Riptide for clarinet and bassoon* was commissioned in 2009 when Martin had just graduated from the University of Michigan; Spring requested a piece for bassoonist Albie Micklich and himself to

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

premiere at his next faculty recital, and wanted a similar exciting “opener” that *Solar Flair* had provided. Martin admits that in this piece, the music was less inspired by Spring’s personality and more by her own personal experiences, but she still knew that she could write as technically difficult a piece as she wanted, because she knew that Spring could successfully play it. “It was a nice feeling to write for such talented performers, and wonderful to have such artistic freedom to do whatever I wanted,” she recalls.<sup>103</sup> Within *Riptide*, there are long passages in which finding a suitable place to breathe is difficult. Martin included breath marks in her score, but she also knew of Spring’s circular breathing ability, and knew that he would most likely choose to do so. “Playing Bob’s commissioned pieces is challenging because it asks us to rise to his ability level (i.e. circular breathe), or at least try our best to do so (i.e. lengthen our phrases, use our entire lung capacity),” she remarks.

Robert Spring commissioned *Live Wire* in 2010 to premiere with Jana Starling at the International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest on a recital with all premieres. Martin describes her compositional process as trying to recreate that “spark” of Spring’s outgoing personality, and was additionally inspired by Starling, “whose energy on stage is always electrifying.”<sup>104</sup>

*Pulse Break for two clarinets and percussion* was commissioned in 2012 to perform in recital at Arizona State University with new clarinet faculty member, Joshua Gardner, and percussionist J.B. Smith. The group additionally performed the piece at the International Clarinet Association’s 2013 ClarinetFest in Italy. In this piece, Spring specifically requested fast articulation, so Martin wrote articulated passages at quarter note = 168-178, requiring double tonguing.<sup>105</sup>

*Postcards from Belgium* was commissioned in 2013 by Jonathan Aubrey as a thank you to Robert Spring. Aubrey had been a student of Spring’s at the Belgium Clarinet Academy in 2012, and he wanted

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

the piece to premiere at the next year's academy in gratitude to Spring and to Guido Six. Since Martin had attended the academy in 2004, her inspirations for the piece came from her memories of her own experiences.<sup>106</sup>

Theresa Martin wrote *Double Take for two clarinets and band* in 2014 to play alongside Robert Spring and the University of Wisconsin Fox Valley Concert Band, where she is now a faculty member. She dedicated the piece to Spring, and had him specifically in mind while writing. "The piece opens with flashy technique, but slows down in a middle lyrical section, and pumps back up again to an exhilarating ending. Bob and I are both Geminis, and the astrological symbol is twins. Thus, the title was inspired by both the instrumentation of a double concerto as well as the astrological sign that Bob and I share. We premiered it together in 2014, and had a great time!"<sup>107</sup>

*Recombobulation* was written at the request of Robert Spring, who wanted a piece composed in memory of his friend Guido Six that would be premiered by the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir at the 2016 ClarinetFest in Lawrence, Kansas. Martin knew Guido Six as well, having attended the Belgium Clarinet Academy in 2004 and playing with his clarinet choir, Claribel, at the 2005 ClarinetFest in Salt Lake City, Utah. "The title, inspired by a sign in the Milwaukee airport, got me thinking about how travelling is a metaphor for life," she remembers. "Bob was devastated at the loss of his friend, and I wanted to write a piece that helped recom"Bob"ulate him (notice that Bob is in the title). Rather than focusing on sad, slow music as in a funeral, the music employs coping strategies (meditation, physical activity, and laughter) and is meant to be uplifting. Bob definitely helped inspire the creation of the piece."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

Martin's most recent commission, *Altitude*, was commissioned in 2016. Spring requested that the piece be written for his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of teaching at Arizona State University, and Martin wrote it in gratitude for all she had learned from him. The first paragraph of her program notes for the work elaborate on this:

*Altitude* was inspired by the teachings and personality of clarinetist, Robert Spring. I wrote this piece in gratitude for all that I've learned from Bob. As one of his students, I experienced first-hand what a pleasure it is to be in his presence. His confidence, positivity, and infectious laugh and smile bring together his studio, past and present, into a close-knit community of musicians who look after one another like family. Bob is an extraordinary teacher, the kind we all strive to become, because he has a gift of seeing potential in a student, and then motivating and inspiring them to achieve great things. The most important lesson I have learned from Bob is that with hard work and believing in yourself, you can accomplish anything.<sup>109</sup>

Martin further explains the three movements in detail, noting that "Updraft," the first movement, is filled with rising gestures which signify striving toward a higher goal. The second movement, "Summit," signifies the view from the top, where a person can admire all they have accomplished. The third movement, "Sage," is reflective of the wisdom one gains from achieving a goal.<sup>110</sup>

Throughout each of her compositions, Theresa Martin claims that her compositional ideas were informed by Spring's virtuosic technical abilities, including his beautiful altissimo register, his ability to circular breathe and double tongue, and his ease of playing multiphonics and quarter tones. Additionally, she states that she has never needed to worry if the music was too technically difficult. Also inspirational to Martin's compositions was Spring's personality.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

“When I am around Bob, I feel a happy, high energy as well. So, a lot of the music I write for him reflects that. His infectious personality brings out the bold musician in me,” she says.<sup>111</sup>

Other pieces for clarinet that Martin has written may still retain her personal style, but she admits to being asked by others on occasion to write music that is “Theresa Martin ‘Lite,’” which would not be as technically demanding. When considering writing for Robert Spring, however, she states, “When you are writing for a living legend, the sky’s the limit. It was very freeing, and it perhaps changed the way I write for clarinet.”<sup>112</sup>

### Scott McAllister

Scott McAllister (b. 1969) is an American composer and clarinetist born in Vero Beach, Florida. He currently is Professor of Composition at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. McAllister received a PhD in composition from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. He has received commissions, performances, and awards throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, including those from ASCAP, The American Composers Orchestra, The Rascher Quartet, I Musici de Montreal, Charles Neidich, The Verdehr Trio, Jacksonville Symphony, De Camera, The Ladislav Kubik Competition, the United States New Music Ensemble, The President’s Own Marine Band, The Florida Arts Council, and The Florida Bandmaster’s Association. Additionally, he has been featured at the Aspen, Chautauqua, and The Prague/American Institute Summer Festivals. While a prolific composer, he is particularly well-known for his clarinet works, including *Black Dog*, which is based on the music of Led Zeppelin, *X Concerto*, and *Freebirds*.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Naxos Records, “Scott McAllister,” accessed January 2, 2018, [https://www.naxos.com/person/Scott\\_McAllister/103913.htm](https://www.naxos.com/person/Scott_McAllister/103913.htm).

McAllister first met Robert Spring after Spring's former clarinet student, Scott Wright, performed *Black Dog* at the College Band Directors National Association conference. Spring enjoyed the piece so much that he contacted McAllister about performing and recording it as well. "I was already a huge fan of Robert Spring!" exclaimed McAllister. "It was an honor to have him champion my music. He has the force and energy plus the beauty that my music requires."<sup>114</sup> Since their first meeting, McAllister and Spring have remained great friends who see each other once or more a year.

*Freebirds* was written in 2007 for Robert Spring, and was commissioned by him along with Arizona State University. McAllister recalls wanting to write something different than *Black Dog*, and then became inspired for his new idea of using two clarinets when Spring told him about his former student, Joshua Gardner, who was in Arizona at the time. The entire piece, including the theme, was composed with Spring in mind. Having an affinity for classic rock music in common with Spring, he drew upon the chasing electric guitar duo in the Lynyrd Skynyrd song *Free Bird*, and wrote his clarinet parts with that in mind. While composing the piece, McAllister worked with Spring on a new lip-gliss from the low E (E3) to the highest C (C7) on the clarinet; Spring assisted with this technique, and later wrote an article about it as well. *Freebirds* was very well-received, and "brought the house down" at its Disney Hall premiere.<sup>115</sup>

McAllister cites that Spring's "pure raw talent and intelligent passion for performing" informed him during his compositional process, and that Spring's technical ability allowed him to go beyond the level of difficulty he had written in *Black Dog*.<sup>116</sup> When considering whether or not Spring has been an influence on other composers and the way that they write for the clarinet, he believes that Spring "has

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<sup>114</sup> Scott McAllister, e-mail to the author, November 27, 2017.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

raised the bar for the clarinet and has expanded the possibilities of what a clarinetist can do... he has opened a door to even more in the future.”<sup>117</sup>

### Whitney Prince

Whitney Prince is Professor of Music at Eastern Michigan University, where he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in written and aural music theory. His works have been performed at the conferences of the International Clarinet Association and the International Double Reed Society. Prior to teaching theory, Dr. Prince served as Percussion Instructor and Associate Director of Bands at Eastern Michigan. Other teaching appointments include serving as the Interim Head of the Department of Music and Dance in 2008-09. Dr. Prince earned degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Colorado, and he studied composition with Anthony Iannaccone.<sup>118</sup>

Whitney Prince and Robert Spring met at the University of Michigan, where they were college roommates from their sophomore year of their undergraduate degrees through the end of their master’s degrees. “In college,” remarks Prince, “Bob was outgoing, generous, and incredibly hard-working – and he still is! We’ve known each other for more than forty years, and he’s one of my oldest and dearest friends.”<sup>119</sup>

Every piece that Prince has composed for the clarinet have been composed for Spring: *Dry Heat for solo clarinet* (2003), *Spin for two clarinets* (2010), *Shaman for solo clarinet and percussion ensemble* (2012), and *Five for 25 for solo clarinet and solo percussion* (2017).

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Eastern Michigan University, “Dr. Whitney Prince,” College of Arts and Sciences, accessed January 2, 2018, <http://emich.edu/musicdance/faculty/facultypages/wprince.php>.

<sup>119</sup> Whitney Prince, e-mail message to author, November 16, 2017.

*Dry Heat*, the first commission for Robert Spring, has an opening theme that is loosely based on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee*, but Prince quickly moves into exploring the motivic possibilities which the initial measure offers. The piece is composed in ABA form with a brief coda, and alternates rapid sixteenth-note triplets with staccato dotted note rhythms in its sections. As Prince explains, "It is a virtuosic work requiring great skill and relentless energy from the performer."<sup>120</sup>

*Spin*, which was commissioned by Spring in 2010 for the International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Austin, Texas and premiered by Spring and clarinetist Jana Starling, was inspired by a vision of "two tops rapidly spinning and repeatedly colliding with one another."<sup>121</sup>

Prince recalls the following of his 2012 commission, *Shaman*: "In many indigenous cultures, shamans are believed to act as intermediaries between the natural and supernatural worlds, using magico-religious practices to cure illness, foretell the future, and control spiritual forces. *Shaman for clarinet and percussion ensemble* depicts a brief shamanistic journey. After an opening display of wizardry, the shaman travels to the spirit world, engages a healing spirit, and returns to the human world joyously transformed."<sup>122</sup>

*Five for 25* was commissioned in 2017 by the students of Robert Spring in celebration of his twenty-five years of teaching at Arizona State University. The five movements within the work share thematic materials and form a musical arc.

For each of the commissioned works, Spring requested the instrumentation, but otherwise, Whitney Prince was left with free rein. "From our many years of friendship, I was very aware of his

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.



abilities and personality. Bob also requested that I make each piece ‘hard as hell,’ which I did,” professes Prince.<sup>123</sup>

Prince recalls writing every one of his works with Spring in mind, and wished to highlight his virtuosity in a variety of musical settings. However, the most recent work, *Five for 25*, is the least technically challenging because Prince wanted to highlight Spring’s expressive side. Throughout it all, Prince attributes Spring’s “remarkable technical facility and his charismatic, engaging personality” as informing his compositional ideas.<sup>124</sup> Additionally, Prince explains that writing for Spring has made him more aware of what is possible on the clarinet, and he professes that he “tempers these expectations (a bit) when not writing for Bob.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.



Example 5: Whitney Prince, *Dry Heat*, mm. 51-58, printed with the permission of the composer. This section, which is marked at quarter note = 104-108, shows some of the technical and articulation challenges within this piece.

While Prince cannot speak for other composers as to whether or not Spring's abilities have caused them to raise their expectations, he does "suspect the answer is 'yes'," and he recognizes the influence on the clarinet community himself. "Bob is probably the hardest working musician I know. He has earned every bit of his success through an incredible work ethic and commitment to his art. He's also one of the most generous and forward-thinking musicians that I know, as evidenced by his many commissions."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

## Rodney Rogers

Rodney Rogers is the current Professor of Composition at Arizona State University. He is a prolific composer of various instrumental and vocal combinations. Four of his compositions received their premiere at Carnegie Hall in New York City, and many of his works have been performed throughout top music programs in the United States, including the Eastman School of Music, The Juilliard School, Cincinnati Conservatory, Florida State University, Indiana University, Northwestern University, Arizona State University, among others.<sup>127</sup>

Rogers' composition *Voices Rising* for solo clarinet was commissioned by Robert Spring, and was premiered at the International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest on July 14, 2000.<sup>128</sup> The piece is based on an Episcopalian chant melody that is developed both in lyrical, rubato passages and virtuosic, technical passages that employ circular breathing, a technique that Spring is known for. The last passage moves through an ascending arpeggio and ends on a high D, two octaves above the staff.

In an interview with Rodney Rogers, James Taaffe Parkinson discovered that prior to Dr. Spring's commission, Rogers had no plans to write any solo works for a single-line instrument. The Episcopalian chant melody was a result of the religious similarities between the two men. "His background with the church was a reason (to use the melody). I have always liked English chant and thought this would be an interesting melody to set. I'm a member of both the Lutheran and Episcopal Church and have great respect for their musical heritage."<sup>129</sup>

Dr. Spring's virtuosic abilities influenced the compositional choices. Rogers states in his interview with Parkinson, "Dr. Spring wanted a work that would have a dramatic and virtuosic ending. So that was really a significant aspect of my initial choices regarding the shape of the piece. I would

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<sup>127</sup> James Taaffe Parkinson, "Inspiration and influence: the role of external forces in the writing of six works for clarinet" (MM Thesis, California State University, 2009), 9.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 10.

actually like to come up with a version that is playable by someone with a little less technical facility.

I've talked to Bob about this but still have not come up with a few alternate passages."<sup>130</sup>

The image displays a musical score for a single melodic line, likely for a clarinet, spanning measures 193 to 206. The score is written on five staves. Measure 193 begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, featuring a series of eighth-note runs with various accidentals. Measure 196 continues with similar eighth-note patterns. Measure 199 shows a change in texture with some notes beamed together and a fermata. Measure 202 is marked '[Amen]' and includes a triplet of eighth notes marked with 'x' above them. The piece concludes in measure 206 with a final cadence. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) at measures 193, 196, and 206; *ppp* (pianississimo) at measure 199; and a crescendo from *pp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte) across measures 202 to 206. Time signatures change from 4/4 to 5/8, 2/4, 3/8, and back to 4/4.

May 2000

Example 6: Rodney Rogers, *Voices Rising*, mm. 193-206, printed with the permission of the composer. This is the end of Rogers' piece, which is marked at quarter note = 132-138.

Additionally, Rogers was aware of Spring's expertise with circular breathing, and he explains within the performance notes of *Voices Rising* that the piece is notated for a performer using circular breathing. However, he does also state that if needed, the clarinetist may discretely add pauses to allow additional spaces for breathing. As one may observe in the following example, the first notated rest of

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

Musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature. The second staff has a measure rest at the beginning, followed by a 4/4 time signature. The third staff has a measure rest at the beginning, followed by a 4/4 time signature. The fourth staff has a measure rest at the beginning, followed by a 4/4 time signature. The fifth staff begins with a 5/4 time signature, which changes to 4/4, then 5/8, and finally 3/4. The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the first staff, and "joyful" is written above the fifth staff. The score includes dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ppp* (pianissimo), and *p* (piano). There are also crescendo and decrescendo hairpins. The melody is simple and folk-like, with a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Robert Spring has commissioned three additional pieces from Rodney Rogers while working as colleagues at Arizona State University, *Gargoyles and Zen Journey for two clarinets and string quartet* (2011), *Igor's Ladder for two clarinets* (2015), and *Fibonacci's Spiral for flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, string bass, and percussion* (2017).

## Peter Schickele

Peter Schickele (b. July 17, 1935) is an American composer, musician, author, and satirist whose output has exceeded 100 works for symphony orchestras, choral groups, chamber ensembles, movies, and television. In his 1987 article entitled “Music: Peter Schickele in an Alternate Mode,” John Rockwell of *The New York Times* described him as having “a leading role in the ever-more-prominent school of American composers who unselfconsciously blend all levels of American music.”<sup>131</sup>

Born in Ames, Iowa and raised in Washington, D.C. and Fargo, North Dakota, Schickele first studied composition with Sigvald Thompson. His graduation from Swarthmore in 1957 earned him the distinction of being the only music major there. Influential composition teachers include Roy Harris, Darius Milhaud, Vincent Persichetti, and William Bergsma. Schickele taught at The Juilliard School until 1965, when he left to become a freelance composer/performer, a career that has successfully carried him throughout his life.

Schickele’s list of well-known achievements is lengthy. Taken directly from his own website, “his commissions are numerous and varied, ranging from works for the National Symphony, the Saint Louis Symphony, The Minnesota Opera, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, The Audubon and Lark String Quartets, the Minnesota Orchestral Association, and many other such organizations to compositions for distinguished instrumentalists and singers.”<sup>132</sup> Notable premieres include performances by the Louisville Orchestra, the Pasadena Symphony, and Yo-Yo Ma and Emanuel Ax. Additionally, Schickele arranged one of the musical segments for the Disney animated feature film, *Fantasia 2000*, created the score for the film version of Maurice Sendak’s *Where the Wild Things Are*,

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<sup>131</sup> John Rockwell. “Music: Peter Schickele in an Alternate Mode.” *The New York Times*, May 17, 1987. Accessed January 15, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/05/17/arts/music-peter-schickele-in-an-alternate-mode.html>

<sup>132</sup> Peter Schickele, “Peter Schickele Bio,” The Peter Schickele/P.D.Q. Bach Web Site, accessed January 5, 2018, <http://www.schickele.com>.

and he created music for four feature films as well as documentaries, television commercials, and several *Sesame Street* segments.

Despite his classical success of a more serious nature, Peter Schickele is likely most well-recognized for his portrayal of “Professor Peter Schickele,” discoverer of the long-hidden manuscripts of P.D.Q. Bach. Since 1965, the Professor has performed for audiences around the world, with more than fifty orchestras including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the London Symphony Orchestra, has published eleven albums of P.D.Q. Bach’s works, and has written *The Definitive Biography of P.D.Q. Bach*.<sup>133</sup>

Peter Schickele first met Robert Spring while working with the ProMusica Orchestra from Columbus, Ohio. The conductor of the orchestra was in Phoenix, Arizona, and Schickele was in town doing a P.D.Q. Bach show. Having commissioned works from Schickele previously, the conductor invited him to lunch, and asked Spring to come along. While at lunch, Spring told Schickele about some of his recordings, and at Schickele’s request, he dropped off his *Dragon’s Tongue*, *Tarentella*, and the Joan Tower compact discs to him at his hotel.<sup>134</sup> Schickele became very interested in writing a clarinet concerto, and was commissioned to do so by the ProMusica Orchestra. “I was very excited at the thought of the piece being performed by Robert, as I knew of his excellent reputation. It meant that I could write just about anything, because he could play anything!” exclaimed Schickele.<sup>135</sup>

Schickele did have experience with the clarinet prior to writing his *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, both as a composer and as a performer.

I had played clarinet when I was younger, I think twelve years old. I had a band with my brother and a couple of friends called ‘Jerky Jems and his Balmy Brothers.’ We thought we were the greatest thing since sliced bread. Anyhow, my band director approached

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<sup>133</sup> Schickele, “Peter Schickele Bio,” <http://www.schickele.com>.

<sup>134</sup> Robert Spring, interviewed by Adria Sutherland, Lawrence, Kansas, August 5, 2016.

<sup>135</sup> Peter Schickele, e-mail to the author, December 20, 2017.

me and said, ‘Peter, you have so many bad habits on the clarinet that I think you’d be better off starting on a new instrument from scratch!’ So I did have some knowledge of the clarinet and had later in my compositional life written a quartet for Clarinet, Violin, Cello, and Piano, which was premiered by David Shifrin and a trio on another occasion. When ProMusica approached me for the concerto, I had already done some sketches; a concerto for clarinet was on my ‘to-be-done-before-I-hit-the-nursing-home’ list.<sup>136</sup>

Because he had communicated with Spring beforehand and studied his recordings, Schickele was able to add elements of Spring’s extended technical abilities into his concerto. There is a section that begins at rehearsal letters AA of movement two, “Out on the Dance Floor,” that showcase his double tonguing abilities, as shown in Example 8.

The image displays a musical score for a clarinet part, spanning measures 198 to 227. The score is written on five staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes rehearsal letters AA, BB, and CC. Measure 198 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The first staff (measures 198-202) includes a box labeled 'AA' and a dynamic marking of *mp*. The second staff (measures 203-208) includes a box labeled 'BB' and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The third staff (measures 209-214) includes a box labeled 'CC' and a dynamic marking of *f*. The fourth staff (measures 215-220) includes a box labeled 'CC' and a dynamic marking of *f*. The fifth staff (measures 221-227) includes a box labeled 'CC' and a dynamic marking of *f*. The score features various musical notations, including eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and rests, as well as a 'sim.' marking in measure 202.

Example 8: Peter Schickele, *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, movement II, “Out on the Dance Floor,” mm. 198-227. This section is marked at quarter note = 176.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.



Additionally, circular breathing is required for optimal performance throughout many sections of the concerto, such as the following example in movement four, “Finale,” from measures 41-54.

The image displays a musical score for a clarinet part, spanning measures 40 to 54. The notation is written on a single staff in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is characterized by a continuous, rapid sequence of eighth notes, many of which are grouped into triplets, indicated by a '3' above the notes. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the beginning of measure 40. The melody is highly technical, requiring circular breathing. A box containing the letter 'E' is placed above the staff at measure 52. The score concludes with a final whole note chord in measure 54.

Example 9: Peter Schickele, *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, movement IV, “Finale,” mm. 40-54. This section is marked at quarter note = 168.

Spring recalls having a wonderful time working with Schickele on the concerto throughout the compositional process and the recording.

When we got done [with the recording], we were all going to do something afterwards, go out and get dinner or whatever, and we had a little bit of time because they had to tear all the recording equipment down. The conductor was working with the recording

engineers to make sure they had all their notes set before everybody left, so Peter and I went across the street to have a martini. We're sitting there, and all of a sudden, Peter starts crying. I thought, 'Oh, God, what did I do?' and he said, 'It's just so nice that somebody took my music seriously! I didn't have to swing in on a rope!'<sup>137</sup>

When asked about his opinion on the depth of Robert Spring's influence on other composers and their compositional styles, Peter Schickele remarked, "I would not be surprised in the least to learn that he has (influenced other composers), although I can't speak for others. I was very pleased with the level of his performance and hearing him play the piece was a highlight of my life as a composer. Certainly, when a performer makes new strides in style and technical execution, everyone wants to capitalize on them!"<sup>138</sup>

### William O. Smith

William O Smith (b. 1926) in Sacramento, California began playing the clarinet at the early age of ten, and by the time he reached his teenage years, he began the performing "dual life" that he has followed throughout his life: not only did he lead a jazz orchestra, but he also performed with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. During his college years, he attended Juilliard by day and played jazz clubs at night.

Smith received his formal education studying composition with Darius Milhaud at Mills College in 1946, and with Roger Sessions at the University of California at Berkeley, earning both B.A. and M.A. degrees by 1952. Additionally, he studied at the Paris Conservatory (1952-53) and the Juilliard Institute (1957-58). He was awarded a Prix de Paris, the Phelan Award, a Prix de Rome, a Fromm Players Fellowship, a National Academy of Arts and Letters Award, BMI Jazz Pioneer Award, and two

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<sup>137</sup> Robert Spring, interviewed by Adria Sutherland, Lawrence, Kansas, August 5, 2016.

<sup>138</sup> Peter Schickele, e-mail to the author, December 20, 2017.

Guggenheim Awards. He has taught on the faculties of the University of California – Berkeley, the San Francisco Conservatory, and the University of Southern California.

While at Mills College, he met Dave Brubeck and became one of the founders of the Dave Brubeck Octet, and was responsible for several of the group's arrangements. "His *Schizophrenic Scherzo*, written for the Octet in 1947, was one of the first successful integrations of modern jazz and classical procedures, a style which later became known as 'third stream.'" <sup>139</sup>

Additionally, Smith was one of the earliest clarinetists to experiment with new colors and resources for the instrument. In 1961, he composed *Duo for Flute and Clarinet*, and used multiple sonorities that were likely the first of their type to be precisely notated. Several similar works later, Smith wrote and performed *Variants* for solo clarinet (1963), about which Eric Salzman wrote (New York Herald Tribune, March 14, 1964): "William Smith's clarinet pieces, played by himself, must be heard to believe – double, even triple stops; pure whistling harmonics; tremolo growls and burbles; ghosts of tones, shrill screams of sounds, weird echoes, whispers and clarinet twitches; the thinnest of thin, pure lines; then veritable avalanches of bubbling, burbling sound. Completely impossible except that it happened." <sup>140</sup>

William O. Smith had his first contact with Robert Spring when Spring was still a student. "He phoned me to ask information about *Variants* for a paper he was writing. It impressed me that he was interested in such a difficult piece. I met him later at a concert and we began a long friendship. He is a treasured colleague," <sup>141</sup> says Smith of Spring.

Smith, whose compositional output for the clarinet in both solo and chamber contexts includes over one hundred pieces, was commissioned to write *Epigrams for Bb Clarinet* and *Four Duets for Four*

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<sup>139</sup> Rehfeldt, *New Directions for Clarinet*, 95.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> William O. Smith, e-mail to author, December 7, 2017.

*Double Clarinets* by Robert Spring. *Epigrams*, written in 2009, is a six movement work with a spoken epigram,<sup>142</sup> read by the performer, between each movement. The first, third, and fifth movements are for one clarinet, while the second movement used only the upper half of the instrument, and the fourth movement uses only the lower half. During the last movement of the piece, both halves, still apart, are played simultaneously.<sup>143</sup>

While William O. Smith did not specify which parts of the works commissioned by Robert Spring were written for his abilities and personality during our communication, he did disclose that they were both written with Spring in mind, and that Spring's mastery of extended techniques were inspiring to him. "As a composer, I feel that I can depend on him to perform perfectly my most difficult ideas,"<sup>144</sup> claims Smith.

Smith feels that Robert Spring has made an impact on clarinetists' overall expectations, saying, "His brilliant use of contemporary techniques have been an inspiration to performers and composers."<sup>145</sup> Additionally, he remarks, "Robert Spring is an exceptionally fine clarinetist, both as a distinguished performer of traditional clarinet literature and a brilliant exponent of contemporary music. His commissions have enriched clarinet literature and his example and teaching have produced many excellent students."<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, an epigram is a "concise poem dealing pointedly and often satirically with a single thought or event and often ending with an ingenious turn or thought."

<sup>143</sup> William O. Smith, e-mail to author, December 7, 2017.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

This document clearly illustrates the strong and consistent influence of clarinetist/composer partnerships on the development of clarinet repertoire throughout the history of the instrument. As professional virtuosi, player-inventors, and commissioning artists, clarinetists have worked closely with composers to inspire and motivate an increasingly idiomatic, challenging, and adventurous repertoire of solo and chamber music. Each partnership discussed in this document influenced contemporary treatment of the instrument; moreover, each partnership helped to shape the direction of future compositions by clearly advancing both the technical and musical potential of the instrument.

The six significant partnerships discussed within Chapter Two of this document have produced some of the most widely respected and well-known literature for the clarinet. As a twenty-first century scholar examining the history of the clarinet, its evolution, and its literature, it is evident that these friendships and collaborations resulted in significant shifts in the expectations of performers' abilities, and for expanding the range of creative possibilities available to composers when writing for the clarinet.

Although composers throughout the second half of the twentieth-century had been increasingly experimenting with extended techniques within their compositions, and certain clarinetists were beginning to learn and perform them with greater ease, there was not a plethora of extended range, multiple sonorities, or multiple articulation written throughout clarinet literature. When Robert Spring began his professional career in the late twentieth-century, performing and recording these extended techniques for audiences around the world, he became a new catalyst for change, prompting another shift in the abilities expected of clarinetists.

Robert Spring's impact on clarinet literature, his influence on compositional styles, and the rate at which he has inspired performers to extend and improve their own playing can be

clearly observed through his substantial list of commissions and in the interviews with the composers in Chapter Five of this document. These composers, many of whom are the most well-known and respected present-day composers of clarinet music, each attributed their knowledge of Robert Spring's playing ability with elevating and altering their own compositional styles. Additionally, each of them appreciated and enjoyed his personality, which added immeasurably to the character to their writing, allowing them to turn a technical piece of music into a story.

Robert Spring's reach is worldwide through both his personal performances and his extensive online presence. Within the last twenty years alone, Spring has performed in the North American countries of the United States of America, Canada, and Mexico; and Guatemala, Venezuela, Chile, and Argentina in the Central and South Americas. He has performed throughout Europe and Asia in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, China, Japan, Korea, and Israel, as well as locations within Africa and Australia.

For those who have not had the opportunity to hear Robert Spring perform or teach in person, one may search for him on YouTube, where countless performances, masterclasses, and interviews can be viewed in their entirety, proving that his reach and influence as a clarinetist has truly spanned every part of the world.

After a thorough examination of the historical lineage of clarinetist-composer partnerships, this document concludes that Dr. Robert Spring, through his awe-inspiring technical and artistic performances, his extensive commissions of new solo and chamber works, and his international presence, has significantly and undeniably altered and expanded the compositional and performance expectations in his lifetime and for generations to come.

## APPENDIX A

### Transcribed Interview with Robert Spring

On August 5, 2016, I had the opportunity to interview Robert Spring at the International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest in Lawrence, Kansas. Dr. Spring had been provided with a list of questions prior to the interview, which he followed as we proceeded. These provided questions are included in boldface type throughout the transcription.

*Adria Sutherland: I want to get a good biography of you, because I've been looking around, and unless I've missed something completely, there's not one, is there?*

Robert Spring: Ok. No, there's not one yet. There's nothing.

**Provided question: Can you tell me a bit about where you are from? What is your hometown? With whom did you live? What was your family like (siblings, jobs, traditions, etc.)?**

RS: Ok, so here's what I wrote. I grew up in Jackson, Michigan. There were four brothers; I'm the oldest. We all did musical things. We all took piano lessons, played in the band, and everyone was active in the Presbyterian Church choir. My dad was an accountant for a utility in Michigan, and then worked his way up, so when he retired, he was a controller and vice president. He did really well in the end, it just took a long time to get there! (laughs) We didn't know, but he made a lot of money towards the end.

But anyway, what did I do growing up? We all had to pay after a while for our own private lessons and everything because, I mean, there were four kids. So I mowed lawns all through high school, and I worked on a construction crew when I was in college.

*AS: You did? What did you do on the construction crew?*

RS: Yeah, I did all the junk nobody else wanted to do! (laughs) Like, in Michigan, which was totally illegal, probably, when they got done building a house, they dug a big pit in the backyard and burned everything that they didn't use, and what they didn't burn, they buried. And it was my job to dig this big hole, like a huge hole, and put everything in it. It really surprised me because years later, I would go by those neighborhoods, and you'd hear people say, "You know, it's really weird that when the ground freezes, it pushes things up."

*AS: That's all that stuff you buried! (both laugh)*

RS: "Yeah, I found a cement block in my backyard!" But anyway, we all took piano lessons and stuff like that, and I played in the band, but I never really had a real clarinet lesson. I studied with the guy who was the band director, and I kind of studied when I was real young with the first chair clarinet in the high school band because nobody had any openings.

*AS: And how much older was that person?*

RS: Ah, four years older. So, when I was a senior in high school, I told my dad I wanted to be a music teacher. We lived close to Ann Arbor, about 45 minutes, so my dad called the school of music, and they transferred him to John Mohler, who was Scott Wright's teacher, too. He told John that I wanted to be a music teacher, and John asked if I'd ever had any lessons. He said, "No," so John said, "Well, I think you'd probably better come over and have him play for me, and see what he can do." I was playing on this old Selmer Signet clarinet with an HS\* mouthpiece, Mitchell Lurie reeds, and I had the ligature on



backwards because I saw someone else had it with the screws in the back. My screws were on this side [pointing to the left] because I didn't know. Also, I'd heard you were supposed to keep your reeds flat, so I got this piece of glass and wrapped it with yarn, and stuck my reeds under the yarn! I didn't know anything! (laughs)

I went over there and played for him. I played for, I don't know, maybe about three or four minutes, probably not even that, maybe about thirty seconds, and he stopped me and he said, "Have you warmed up or anything today?" I said, "No," because I didn't know you were supposed to do that. He said, "There are some practice rooms in the basement. Why don't you go down there and warm up." So, I went downstairs and I played a few notes. I didn't know. He said to play a couple of scales, and that's all I knew were a couple of scales. So, I played those scales and came back up, and he said, "Bob, you're back already?" (laughs) He said, "What do you have?" and I'd found this really cool piece at a local music store, and I didn't know how to pronounce it, so I said, "I'm doing this piece by Weber [pronouncing the "w" as in "water"] and it's called *Grand Duo Concertante* [pronounced concertan-tay]." He said, "That's the Weber *Grand Duo Concertante*," [pronouncing it correctly] and I said, "Oh! Ok, I didn't know that." So, I started playing the third movement, and he stopped me and said, "Wow, you're not very good."

AS: *Oh my gosh!* (both laugh)

RS: If you knew John Mohler, this is how he talked to you. "Wow, you're not very good." So, I didn't know what to do. He said, "Well, we've got a doctoral student who can teach you," and I said, "Well, I really wanted to study with you." I remember him kind of going, "Well, we'll give it a try. I can't teach you next week, so it'll be two weeks, and what I want you to do is to go downtown, and there's a music store downtown called Hadcock Music." That was Pete Hadcock's, the guy who wrote the clarinet excerpt book, Pete Hadcock's father. Pete was from Ann Arbor. So, I went down and I bought the book,

Baermann's third method, the one with all the scales in it. He said, "I want you to learn C major at 60, and just do it all slurred." So, I thought, "Ok," but I didn't know what "60" meant! I didn't have a metronome, I didn't know any of that. So, I came back two weeks later and I played it twice, and after I played it the second time, I mean, literally all week I practiced it about twice, he said, "Look, this isn't going to work. You don't understand." I started to cry and I said, "I don't understand. I don't understand what you want me to do. I really don't understand. Please, show me."

So anyway, he spent 45 minutes with me, that's how long the lessons were, and he charged two dollars and 50 cents, and he showed me how to practice. That's actually the last unprepared lesson I ever had, and I think that's one of the main events that made me decide that I really wanted to become an educator. To realize that he changed my life by spending 45 minutes with me instead of just saying, "You're awful," and "Get out of here." I thought it was pretty cool.

So I studied with him, and I practiced all the time. I loved it, and I thought it was so cool that I was going to Ann Arbor to study with this guy. Then, it came time to apply for college and I didn't know you should apply to more than one school. I only applied to the one, so I'm lucky I got in. I said to him, "I need to have an audition ready." He'd had me preparing a whole bunch of pieces for my audition, and I had one lesson where I went in and played two of them, and I said, "Am I getting close to being ready?" and he said, "Eh, yeah." So I said, "Well, when do I audition?" and he said, "You just did."

In the fall, we all had to play in the marching band. It was part of the thing; we all had to play. We had marching band auditions, and that's when I, like, really realized how bad I was. We had the auditions, and there were 57 clarinets, and I was chair 54 or something, way at the bottom. So, I was really humiliated by it, but I just kept practicing every day, and John would give me stuff to do, and I just did what he did. You know, at the University of Michigan, there were a lot of really great clarinet players there, and I was really embarrassed because I was really terrible, so I used to get up in the morning

really early, and I would go down and practice from 7:30-8:30 because none of the cool kids were there yet. (laughs) That's when I practiced first, and then I practiced in the middle of the afternoon before marching band in the fall because that's when they had orchestra, and none of the cool kids were there then either, so they couldn't hear me. I also practiced another hour in the night after I did my homework. I was practicing about three hours every day. And when we had auditions again the next year for marching, and I was first chair.

*AS: Hey, it worked! (both laugh)*

RS: Everybody said, "What school did you transfer from?" because they'd never seen me. I was hiding! So anyway, that's a bit about growing up. It was a big family and we all had to pitch in, so that's how we did it. Want me to keep going with these questions?

*AS: Keep going! This is great!*

**Provided question: Do you have any outstanding musical memories from your young childhood that stand out to you?**

RS: Ok, so outstanding musical memories. Yeah, well, there are a couple. My piano lesson situation was lousy. I started taking piano when I was four and I quit when I was sixteen.

*AS: That's a long time though.*

RS: Yeah, and I never got any good. I was terrible. The lady I studied with, she was one of those who would hit your hands. So, I really grew to love music that way. (laughs)

But, I actually did love listening to music. My dad was working for a lot of the time when we were little. He would do his office work after we went to bed at night, and he had an old record player.

It was an RCA thing that you could fold up and carry from room to room, and it had the speaker in the top, and he would play classical music. There were a couple of pieces I remember. He loved Beethoven 5; he would play that all the time. At that time they were on 78's, and you could stack them. The other one was Oscar Levant playing *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra, and I remember that. So, I always remember that there was music in our house all the time.

AS: *Are your parents musicians?*

RS: Well, Mom played piano, but my dad, he was an accountant. He played clarinet and saxophone in college to put himself through, in what they called "dance bands." The reason I started playing clarinet, I forgot that, was that they always told me I was going to play clarinet, because my dad played clarinet. There was an old LeBlanc clarinet that he had sitting in the house, and I remember it had a white mouthpiece. Then they traded that in and got this Conn plastic clarinet, which in the end was a real mistake; they should've kept the LeBlanc. But, anyway, that's why I started playing. Oh! So, this leads up to the next thing, the "musical memories."

You know, Jackson's not a real big town. In the sixth grade, they took all of us from different elementary schools and we got to spend one day in the junior high school. We had somebody that we were assigned to that would take us to classes and stuff so we could learn what it was like to go from classroom to classroom. You know, that's scary. So, this person that took me around, this girl, was in the band. So, I went to band with her, and I sat in the front, this little sixth grader, and I was scared. The band played a watered-down version in this little march book of *Americans We*. I thought it was the most amazing sound I'd ever heard. I was just so taken back by it. And the band director was just this screamer, you know, "That's terrible!" and "You're awful!", "You've gotta go practice!" But I thought it was really...

AS: *You thought it was awesome!*

RS: Yeah, I did! That was the moment I really decided that I wanted to be a musician. Hearing that, it was just so cool. That sound, I'll never forget that sound, it was so amazing. And it's funny, actually the reason I wanted to become a teacher was because those guys yelled all the time. I thought, "Isn't there a better way to do this?" (laughs)

And so, around our house there was always music, and there was a piano. Then my dad got on this recorder kick for a while. (laughs)

**Provided question: When did you begin playing the clarinet? How did you choose that instrument? Tell me a bit about your first experiences with the instrument. Did you love it or struggle with it? Did you practice a lot as a child? Did you have a private teacher or a band director as your main guide?**

RS: So anyway, in the third question you asked "when did I begin playing clarinet?" That was in seventh grade, and I didn't have any lessons then. I did struggle with it a lot, but I liked it. You know, we didn't have any private study at all; it was all just band. There was not even a clarinet break-out or a woodwind sectional or anything, so everything you did, you had to kind of invent on your own. So, I mean, I invented fingerings. From F to F sharp, I kind of rolled my thumb back. It kind of works. (laughs) I didn't know there were alternate fingerings or stuff like that, and I also didn't know how to make an embouchure, so I played double lip because no one told me that you weren't supposed to do that. It wasn't until our junior high band marched in a Memorial Day parade or something, and I was saying to the guy next to me, "Gosh, this hurts when we march." He said, "Why?" and I said, "My upper lip." He said, "Well, you're supposed to put your teeth on it." I said, "Oh! (laughs) That makes it easier!" And the struggle was that I didn't have a private teacher, my band director didn't help, and I didn't know how to practice. I also didn't know how to play. I think basically I was anchor tonguing; [pointing with his finger] it was somewhere back there. My embouchure was also a mess, and I didn't know about

alternate fingerings. So, when we started doing things, I slid all the time. I remember going to my band director, and I was trying to learn E flat major thirds, because we were playing some piece that had them. I said, "How do you do this? I don't understand how to do this," and it was going from C to E flat. He said, "Oh, you go like this and get your finger ready [shows getting pinky finger "greasy" on his nose], and slide." (both laugh) I never knew that there was such a thing!

At the end of junior high school, I had pretty long hair, and he got really upset with me for having that long hair. About five days before the end of school, we were done with everything. We were just like going into band and sitting there, and he wasn't doing anything either. All of a sudden he decided that he was going to reseat the clarinets. Why, I don't know, because we didn't have anything else. So, you know, all of a sudden one day, surprise audition. I was first chair, and this surprise audition was on some piece that I didn't ever know, and I think I didn't even know I was supposed to have a reed. So he moved me all the way down to last chair, and that was how I left junior high school, being last chair in the band. Then he told the high school band director not to take me in the band, and the high school band director made me an alternate in the marching band as a freshman.

*AS: Why did he tell him that?*

RS: He didn't like me then and I think he thought it would teach me some kind of lesson. I think it was the hair. So then the high school director allowed me to be an alternate in the marching band, and he didn't really want me in the top band, but finally, he decided that I could play bass clarinet in the top band, because the "bad kids" played bass clarinet. At least that's how they thought about that.

So, yeah, I struggled a lot at the beginning. I think it was only that I liked it that I kept going. If I hadn't liked it, I would've given up a long time ago.

**Provided question: When did you get your first clarinet teacher, and how did he/she shape your path?**

RS: So, I did talk to you about my first clarinet teacher, John Mohler.

AS: Yes.

RS: He shaped everything. I mean, I wouldn't be able to do anything if it weren't for John.

AS: *And you started with him when you were a senior?*

RS: Yeah, a senior in high school. It was in the fall of '72. John has a story he tells. He doesn't remember the part about telling me I was terrible, but he does remember that our high school band and his kids' high school band were in the same conference. They played each other in football, and we were over there at a football game. The band director never went to anything, so I took a bunch of us who decided to have a pep band, and we went to Ann Arbor and sat in the stands, and played the fight song over and over again. I was drum major of the band. After the game, my mom and dad were driving us back, and I was making a joke. I jumped out of the car and started running around, and said, "This man's stealing my car!" and the guy in the car right next to us was John Mohler! (both laugh)

**Provided question: What are some of the most important musical memories from your pre-college days?**

RS: Important musical memories from pre-college days. I'd say the overall feeling of playing with a group was more than anything, the factor and the reason that I wanted to keep going. I don't really have any memories of aesthetic feelings or anything from high school or junior high because I didn't like the fact that it was negative.

I think my very first memory of like a real aesthetic feeling was when I was in the Michigan marching band, and I heard that sound for the first time. I thought, “Oh my God,” you know? I liked the band and I liked playing in it, but I don’t have memories of the “shivers” in high school. I just remember a lot of yelling. At that point, teachers were going on strike, and one time they went on strike, the students and I all arranged to have a band rehearsal without the band director there, outside, because there was going to be a big game that week. And I got in BIG trouble for that.

*AS: Did you?*

RS: Oh, God.

*AS: You were leading the group, conducting them?*

RS: Yeah, I was drum major and all that stuff, so I did.

**Provided question: What kinds of music were you exposed to as a young person? Did they shape your preferences as an adult? Did they influence your style of clarinet playing or impact the pieces you most enjoy performing?**

RS: What kinds of music was I exposed to? Well, my dad used to listen to stuff. He never listened to a lot of jazz or a lot of classical music; some Benny Goodman, some swing stuff, but not “out there” kind of 50s and 60s jazz, bebop and stuff like that. But, the other kind of music was rock music. I grew up in southern Michigan with the whole Motown thing.

*AS: Did you love that?*

RS: Yes! More than that though, was in 1969; I played in this rock band in high school. Everybody did.

*AS: What did you play in the rock band?*



RS: Guitar. I had a Gibson Les Paul guitar and a Fender Bandmaster amplifier. I still have the amplifier but my brother has the guitar. So, in '69, my parents, even though I was only fourteen, they drove us into Detroit to Cobo Arena, and I saw Jimi Hendrix. Then two weeks later, there was a place up on Gratiot Avenue there in Detroit called Grande Ballroom, and they let me go there, and I heard this British blues band called Led Zeppelin. Also, Bob Seger and Ted Nugent used to play all over Jackson. In fact, Bob Seger played some of our high school dances.

AS: *Are you serious?*

RS: Yes! So, I was exposed to that kind of stuff and I still listen to a lot of that kind of music. I mean, after our daughter was born, our first date was to go hear Pink Floyd. (laughs) I still listen to a lot of that kind of stuff, and that was probably the aesthetic experience that I had in high school, more based on this whole popular music thing. It all had an influence on me. It had an influence because the thing that I couldn't figure out was that I'd go to symphony concerts and everybody was like this [sitting very straight, stiff, and proper] for an hour pretending like they enjoy it. Then you'd go to hear Led Zeppelin, and everyone was singing along, and the amount of energy and connection with the audience was something that really was incredible to me. I thought, "How can you connect like that, and how come orchestras can't connect like that? Or bands, or anything?" Well, bands that are playing a summer pops concert connect, but the majority of the time they don't, and I was trying to figure out how you can connect with your audience. It's funny, I was talking to Michael Lowenstern last night after he played, and I've known him for a long time because his wife was one of John Mohler's students. So we were talking, and I said, "Michael, the thing that always gets me is that you can grab an audience in ten seconds, and all of a sudden they're yours." That's something I really envy and that's something I think came out of that time of my life.

I think it also impacted the kind of pieces I was playing at that point, because when I left Michigan, which was privy to this passion of conservatism at that point, I started trying to get involved with new music. It was amazing to me what was there that I didn't realize, and the sounds that you could make and everything. The first piece I bought in this genre was Bill Smith's *Variants for Solo Clarinet*. I remember working on it, and my eyes and my world just changed because I didn't know you could do these things. Bill has become a really good friend. In fact, he wrote me two pieces, and I told him, I showed him a copy of the piece and had him sign it. I think that in terms of my style of playing, and what I did particularly in new music came from trying to get those kinds of sounds that those guys were able to get on their guitars. It was just pretty amazing – the whole electronic music thing in the '70's probably came from there.

**Provided question: How did you choose your undergraduate college? Tell me about your experiences there... your teachers, ensembles, collaborators, etc. What kind of student were you?**

RS: So, how did I choose my undergraduate college? My dad went there, and it was just always said that I'd go to the University of Michigan. Nobody knew that it was hard to get into as a music student. My parents didn't know that. John Mohler was an incredible, incredible teacher. As a master's student, I studied with David Shifrin, and he was really incredible too.

I was a good student. I mean, I got a couple of B's here and there in core classes, but I never got anything lower than that. Those were primarily in Astronomy or something like that; one of the core courses. In the music courses, I think I was all A's.

The ensemble situation was pretty amazing. I don't know how you're going to write this, or if you'd ever write it, but this is one of those first experiences where I realized I had an impact on somebody's life, and it was not a positive impact. So, I was in the Michigan Symphony Band, and this

was second semester, freshman year. I told you I started way in the back of the marching band, but the practicing paid off. Symphony band didn't meet at the same time as marching band. It was during that time period of time when marching band met, and then you went into concert band. So, I was way at the back of symphony band's section, and the section had about 27 clarinets. The first concert we did the "March" from *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, and the conductor at that time was a guy named George Cavender. William D. Revelli had retired, George Cavender was put into this position; he'd been Revelli's assistant for years and they just bumped him up, and unfortunately he was not able to do the job. He really was incapable of doing it. The applied faculty went to every concert, and the next day I had a lesson with John Mohler. I always had 8:30 Monday morning lessons; I liked that time. He said, "What did you think of the concert?" and I said, "Frankly, Dr. Mohler, I was really disappointed." "Why?" he asked. I said, "Well, this is the Michigan Symphony Band – the band that went to Russia, the band that did all these things, and we couldn't play the parts, I mean, we were just faking it." Well, he made a phone call and asked me to leave the room, and within five minutes the entire wind faculty was in his office. John was chair of the wind and percussion department. I started to shake, and he called me back in and said, "This is Bob Spring, and he's a freshman. Bob, would you tell the wind faculty what you just told me?" I looked at him, and he said, "It's ok, it's between us." So I told the entire faculty, and Cavender was let go after that. I don't think it was me alone, but I was this little freshman boy coming in noticing that.

So after that, they hired this guy named H. Robert Reynolds, and he started at Michigan when I was a junior. It took a year to get rid of the other guy, George Cavender. We had auditions, and I was his very first chair in the band. I was scared beyond belief because I had heard all this stuff. This is when everything became full circle: Bob refused to yell. He said, "Animosity does not make good music." We would have these rehearsals, and what he did that was so amazing was that there wasn't this yelling. He'd stop and he'd say, "I'm disappointed. I thought we could get further. I know that this

process is going to take a few years, but I'm not going to yell at you. You're going to have to learn this."

And I just thought, "Wow!"

So, we played a tour with him, and I played in the band for 3 years with him. Two and a half of those, I was first chair, and then my senior year first semester, this gal named Heather Blackie, now it's Heather Davis, beat me out for one semester. (laughs) The last concert we played was in what has now become Orchestra Hall in Detroit. At that point, the Detroit Symphony was playing downtown in an auditorium called Ford Auditorium. Obviously the Ford family paid for it, and it was acoustically just a nightmare; it was terrible.

So, this guy that was second bassoon in the Detroit Symphony was driving home one day, and he saw a theatre called the Paradise Theatre, and it was for sale. Something happened, I don't remember the whole story, but in the end they realized that's where the Detroit Symphony used to play. It had gone from Orchestra Hall to becoming a movie house, to becoming a place where they showed porn and stuff like that. And so, they were going to tear it down, and put in a Gino's Pizza. A guy who was a chairman of Gino's pizza was also on the Detroit Symphony board. They walked in to look at the property, and realized what it was: it was old Orchestra Hall. The chandelier was still hanging from the ceiling, but the walls were rotted out and everything. So, they raised a lot of money, and that's where the orchestra now is, and it's just beautiful, incredible. But we played in there when the walls were rotted out. Oh God, it was terrible! However, it was this experience with Bob Reynolds where we had this incredible musical event taking place in this bombed out building. That was just one of the most amazing things, and I think that was something that changed my whole life in terms of feeling what it was like.

**Provided question: What were a few of your most memorable times from your undergraduate education?**

RS: I think I've hit on number 8.

AS: *Yes, you did.*

**Provided question: After undergraduate, did you go straight to graduate school? If not, what did you do instead?**

RS: Yes, I went right to graduate school, right to doing my master's degree. John went on sabbatical. He had a semester off, and he arranged for people to come in and teach for him, but I decided to go and study with David Shiffrin during that time. When John came back, he thought I was going to come back and study with him, but I decided to stay with David, and I think I really hurt John. He said, "I wish you'd told me." I didn't know what to say. But, David was an amazing teacher. If you did things John's way, it always worked, but he liked to teach a certain way, and it worked, and he didn't like you to break away from that. David, on the other hand, just said, "Try this, try anything, you're boring me."

**Provided question: Why did you choose to stay at University of Michigan for your masters? Tell me about your experiences there (same as undergraduate).**

RS: And so, the reason I stayed at Michigan was because David was there. He was such an amazing player and I got along with him really well. David and I had a really good experience together. He was always really good to me.

**Provided question: Post master's degree, did you go directly to begin work on your DMA? If not, what did you do instead?**

RS: No, I didn't go right to work on my DMA. I left my master's degree, and the University of Michigan didn't really prepare you at that point, I didn't think, for anything. My undergraduate degree was in music education, and my student teaching experience was awful. I was watched once by a graduate student who didn't even talk to me afterward, and it was like I was completely on my own. I felt like I was hung out to dry, and nobody talked about 'how do you apply for a job,' 'how do you do anything.' At the end of my master's degree, which was a one-year master's degree, I realized, "I don't have a job."

*AS: Now, did you get that degree in performance or education?*

RS: My master's degree was in performance. Wind instrument performance. It was clarinet, but you had to study all the other instruments. I studied saxophone with Don Sinta, I studied bassoon with Hugh Cooper, oboe with a guy named Arno Mariotti. For flute, I got a TA. This was also back when there were huge summer programs. There was a big summer band, and so it was a huge master's program.

Anyway I left, and I didn't know what I was going to do. I had no idea. So, I took a couple of orchestra auditions, one for the New Jersey Symphony, and I realized that first of all, I wasn't prepared, and secondly, there were like 200 people there auditioning in a room. It was a bad experience. So, I worked at the junior high with the screamer band director for a year, and I also taught a bunch of private students. Then I also taught part-time at Albion College, which is a little Methodist school.

*AS: Were you their clarinet teacher?*

RS: Yeah, and so that was a year, and during that time I realized I didn't really want to do junior high band. (both laugh)

*AS: Especially not with that guy!*

RS: Right! So, I decided that the best thing would be for me to see if I could do something else. At this point, you could still get teaching positions at colleges with just a master's degree. So I got this job at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa. It's funny, my job was clarinet and marching band, and I was perfect for the role. All those years spent in the marching band had actually prepared me for something! So, I took this band, and when I got there, they said they'd have 96 people in the band at this little college. I got there, and they would've had 96 people if they'd cut everyone in half, because there were only 48 people. So, I started recruiting like crazy, right? I was hired on a one-year contract, and the guy decided he didn't want to come back. The students went in masses to the president and asked that he not be allowed to return, but I didn't know about it. The funny part is, in the meantime, I'd applied for other jobs, and I was about to interview at the University of Kentucky.

AS: *Oh my gosh!*

RS: That was when they hired Ron Monsen instead. I was about to interview, but Morningside forced the guy out, and asked me to stay. And this is the best part: this little tiny school was paying me more money than Kentucky was going to pay me.

AS: *They were a private school, right?*

RS: Yeah, and at that point, you wanted to teach at a state school, but Kentucky's salary was going to be \$13,000, and Morningside was going to be \$13,500. (both laugh)

AS: *Stay where that big money is!* (laughs)

RS: I stayed where I was! I told Josh Gardner this story, and he said, "Oh my gosh, you could've been my teacher!"

So anyway, after a couple of years there in a tenure track position, the dean called me in and said, "You're going to want to start a doctorate. You won't be considered for tenure if you haven't

started it.” So, I always wanted to study with Robert Marcellus, so I auditioned for him and was accepted at Northwestern. It was about three weeks before I was supposed to start at Northwestern, and I hadn’t received any information. At that point, I found out that no one had completed a DMA in Clarinet Performance at Northwestern yet. A guy named Dennis Nygren who taught at Kent State for years was the first one to finish. They were all being held back or something; there was always something that wasn’t good enough. So I was really panicked, and I didn’t have any information. And then I found out that Marcellus wasn’t teaching in the summer; I was going to start in the summer, but he wasn’t teaching then. He taught about three weeks, and that was it, and then he was at Interlochen and conducted the orchestra there. I realized at that point that I hadn’t done my homework, and that I wasn’t even really going to study with him until I did my residency, and I didn’t want to quit my job.

So, I called John Mohler and said, “John, I don’t know what to do,” and he said, “Why don’t you come over the house and we’ll talk.” I remember I went over to his house and sat in his front room and drank iced tea, and he said, “Look, I’ll grease the skids and get you back in here if you want to come back here, but I don’t know what your feelings are about getting three degrees in the same place.” So, anyway he greased the skids, he got me in, and I started studying with him that summer. It was an amazing experience because it was so different than being an undergraduate student. I mean, I had been practicing for these three years in between a masters and that. I’d been practicing all the time, learning new music, old music, everything I could find. I’d go to the music store and buy everything I could buy with my meager salary, and then go back and learn it. I was ready. It was an amazing experience; he let me do a lot. They were winding down their summer program, and the nice thing was that I had theory classes with only about three or four people, so I got a chance in theory and history classes to really understand the material.

*AS: That’s great.*



RS: Yeah, it was pretty cool.

**Provided question: Looking back on your formal education, what were some of the specific experiences that drove you to be the kind of musician you are today?**

RS: Ok. Well, the teaching experience came, I think, from negative teaching, and then the opposite from John Mohler. John had this incredible way of making you work. It was kind of like what Bob Reynolds did, like a guilt thing. He just said, "Wow, I was really hoping we could move on today, but I guess we can't." The other thing was that he didn't want you in music if you didn't want to be in music. And so, one of the things he said which I will never forget was a girl came in for a lesson who didn't want to practice, and he said, "Well, why don't you do something else?" (both laugh) He never yelled at anybody. The experience that John gave was that John was such a caring teacher on a very basic level, and he taught you everything that you needed to know. He came to every recital, he came to every band concert. Not only did he treat you like you were his student, but he also made you feel like you were really important to him.

AS: *That's wonderful.*

**Provided question: When did you become interested in performing contemporary music? You are widely revered for your performances of extended clarinet techniques. How did you begin experimenting with and mastering extended techniques?**

RS: John was never afraid to step outside of his comfort zone. He had never played a piece with a multi-phonetic in it, but when I was a freshman he played a piece by Alexander Obradovich called *Micro Sonata* and he had to play multi-phonics. I remember him practicing them and playing them for us in every

lesson, and we thought, “What are these crazy sounds?” (laughs) He encouraged us to experiment and to open up all the time, and David was the same way.

The reason that I actually became interested in contemporary music had to do with that. John had this idea that things could be expanded, but he wasn’t really into it; you could tell he wasn’t really into it. David was definitely not into it. So, that year that I graduated and I was doing the public school teaching and everything else, I also played in this orchestra in Detroit called the Detroit Civic Orchestra. I don’t even know if they exist anymore. It was part of the Detroit Symphony, and we studied with members of the Detroit Symphony. I’d won a competition and played a Weber Concerto with the Detroit Symphony; it was kind of like a training orchestra.

Anyway, we rehearsed in this old building in downtown Detroit that was the J. L. Hudson Company. Hudson’s was like a Macy’s in Detroit. In fact, Hudson’s joined with another company in Minneapolis a few years later, and that was Dayton-Hudson Corporation, and they had stores, Dayton’s and Hudson’s, and they also started a discount store. They sold off the old stuff in the old buildings to Macy’s and kept the discount store, and now that’s called Target. (laughs) So anyway, we had these rehearsals in this old building, and since I didn’t play on every piece, when I was there I was kind of stuck in downtown Detroit, so that’s when I would go off and practice. That’s when I got all this music.

There were two pieces that turned my life around. One was Bill Smith’s piece, that *Variants* for solo clarinet. The other was a piece by Ron Caravan called *Excursions* for clarinet. I just couldn’t believe the sounds, and I thought at the time that you were able to express yourself without the rigid aspects of time and pitch, which are of paramount importance in classical music. I think that’s why I became interested in doing it. The other one was actually out of necessity. Particularly during my doctoral studies with John Mohler, if I brought in like Brahms or Debussy or Mozart or something like that, he

just tore me apart. You had to do it exactly the way he wanted it. But if I brought in some new piece, he didn't know it, so I could just play! (laughs)

The other thing was living in Iowa, in Sioux City, there was a guy who had a music store across the river in South Sioux City, Nebraska named Jay Wicker. He was an old band director, and he had this music store called Jay's Music. What he basically did was he sold music for band directors and orchestral conductors, and his solo repertoire that he sold was primarily for kids going to contests, Weber Concertinos and stuff like that. So, the publishing companies said, "We can get you these pieces cheaper if you will buy this new music," because they're trying to get rid of this new music. Nobody in Iowa or northeast Nebraska was going to buy that stuff. And so, he put it in a Coors beer box, one of those old kinds that flipped open on the top, and he wrote on the side "Bob's Bin". He would put that new music in and would call me when it was full. I would go over and get it. Oh, God, I got Joan Tower's *Wings*, I got Morton Subotnick's *Passages of the Beast*, all that stuff out of there.

The other thing was, I was 24 when I started teaching at Morningside College, and I realized as a young clarinet teacher at a small college, that no one was going to know who I was if I just played stuff that everybody else did. So, I started doing something to set me apart from other people. That takes me to a point that I should've mentioned earlier. My very first music history class at University of Michigan as a freshman, it was like the first or second day of school, we walked in and this guy named William Malm who came on stage in this cap and gown, and he said, "I do this today for two reasons. One is to show you that you can do this if you stick with it long enough. The other is to tell you that I am the world's expert (and he was) in the music of the Javanese gamelan." Now gamelan is known by more and more people, but I didn't know what that was then. He said, "The reason that I'm the expert is because no one else wanted to be. If you want to be an expert in something, find something that no one else wants to do, and do it better."

So, here I was, this young kid trying to make a name. How did I begin extended techniques? I started experimenting because I found that contemporary music, I realized I could do it, and I liked it. People started to get to know me, and I started getting students. It was kind of 'necessity is the mother of invention.' I needed to get students, teaching at this little Methodist school in the middle of nowhere, Iowa, and I had to figure out some way to get band directors to notice me and have their students check it out. I think that was it, and I figured it was something that I could do.

The double-tonguing and all that stuff was learned not because I wanted to show off or something. The double-tonguing was learned because of Mort Subotnick's *Passages of the Beast*, which is a very early clarinet and electronics piece. You had a pickup and you plugged it into this box, he called it a ghost box, and you put a computer chip in there and then you press buttons. It all ran on a timer, and at different times this ghost box would do different things to your sound. So you might be playing low G, but what you'd hear coming out of the speakers was (makes a low waving siren kind of noise) and all this. It was an early attempt at a MIDI instrument, but taking your sound and converting acoustical signals into MIDI signals. So, it was a pretty amazing thing. But at the end, you had to tongue sixteenth notes at 184. You had to, because the machine just went on (tapping a quick beat). So, I called my brother, he's a trumpet player in Michigan, and I said, "How do you double tongue?" He said, "Just go 'duh-guh-duh-guh-duh-guh-dug-guh-duh.'" Well, I tried that and it was a squeak fest on my clarinet at first, but I learned how to double tongue for that piece.

I learned the circular breathing when I did Joan Tower's *Concerto*. I had to audition to get permission to do this recording. I auditioned for her, because it was going to be the first recording of a couple of her pieces. When I finally got the permission to do it, she sent me the music, and I remember it came on a Saturday. I opened up the music and I looked at it, and I'm like, shaking. It was manuscript at the point, the *Concerto* was, and so I looked at it, and there was no place to breathe in the first two pages. So, I called her up, and I said, "Joan, this is Bob Spring, and I got the music, thank you," She

wouldn't let me record it for nine months; she said it would take that long to learn, which it did. I said, "There's no place to breathe in the first two pages," and she said, "Well, you do circular breathe, don't you?" I said, "Yeah, yeah, I just didn't know what you wanted me to do." I hung up, and my wife said, "What's wrong?" and I said, "I have nine months to learn how to circular breathe!" (both laugh)

**Provided question: Where and when was the first occasion of you being "noticed" for being exceptional for your performances of contemporary music?**

RS: The first time was actually in 1988. I'd just gotten the job at ASU, and Chuck West was hosting the clarinet convention in Richmond, VA. Somebody cancelled – a guy named Wilbur Moreland who taught in Mississippi cancelled. He had something – a death in the family or something. They needed somebody to play like a 10 minute piece on a potpourri concert at 8:30 in the morning. Chuck West had applied for the job at Arizona State; he really wanted it and didn't get it – I got it. He called me up and said, "I just want to see what you have that I don't have." So, I decided to do this piece by Russell Riepe called *Three Studies on Flight*. It had all this double tonguing in it, and that was when it happened. It's really funny, because Philippe Cuper and I were on the same concert, and he still remembers that. Last night we were talking and he said, "Who was that composer? Riepe, Riepe!" I think that was it, and then I just kind of ran with it for a while to see how that would work. It was more of a necessity thing. I had to figure out "what can I do that's different?" I was 33 years old; what was I going to do to compete against older people to get students? I had to do something.

**Provided question: Your performances on your CD, *Dragon's Tongue*, have been described as changing the way composers began to write for the clarinet. How do you feel about this?**

RS: Frank Kowalsky said that; he wrote that in a letter for me. He said that it changed the way composers write for the clarinet. I think that there's a plus and a minus to that, and it's the same thing

as other things. As soon as somebody does something on an instrument, composers think it's ok and they write for it. Like high range, for example. Eric Mandat's writing up to high E flats now, and Theresa Martin wrote up to a high E. People are writing things like that. I think somebody else would've taken the same direction – I just got there first.

The record (Dragon's Tongue) was actually not designed to do anything like that. John retired from Michigan and they did a scholarship for him, and I thought, "That's kind of useless – he's gone." I mean, he doesn't get to use the scholarship! (laughs) So, he'd given me all his music for clarinet and band, and this whole box came. I still have the letter. So I thought, "Maybe I can do this. Maybe I can make a record of all this music."

It also started because I was double tonguing *Flight of the Bumblebee* as part of my warm-up at school. The trumpet player, Doc Severinsen, was teaching at ASU then, and we had this thing for many years while he was there. I was practicing, and all of a sudden the door just flung open, and it was Doc Severinsen standing there, and he started swearing at me. I said, "What's wrong?" and he said, "I can't even do that!" (both laugh) So, I think that's why I decided to do it.

I actually didn't think it was going to change anything. It was just a present to John; it was just my present to him. Once we got done with it, John and I went to dinner with the recording engineer, and John said, "You know, this is going to change everything." I said, "No, it's not going to change anything." He said, "Nobody has ever done anything like this. It's going to change everything." And then he said the funniest thing. He said, "The only problem is that you're going to have to play these live." I said, "I can do that!" and he said, "No you can't, it just took you two hours to get through one!" (both laugh) I was just very fortunate to be there.

**Provided question: You have commissioned a large body of works for clarinet, and for your clarinet/percussion duo. How did you choose the composers to write the pieces? What was it like working with them?**

RS: So, the clarinet and percussion stuff. First of all, that started because when I got to West Texas State, I was hired to teach clarinet, it was my first clarinet job.

*AS: This was the job before ASU?*

RS: Yes. So I was hired to teach clarinet, play in the woodwind quintet, and play in the Amarillo Symphony. When I got there, the guy from the Amarillo Symphony refused to leave, so that wiped that out, and it also wiped out about \$10,000 worth of pay. Then in the woodwind quintet, the horn player quit. So here I was in Canyon, Texas, and it's not the edge of the earth, but you can see it from there, with nothing to do. At the beginning, it was a very, very bad time. All the other faculty were in the orchestra, and here I was, not. I didn't know anybody, and they were not real friendly to me, but the percussion teacher was really nice. Susan Martin is her name. She'd gone to Ohio State, and she said one day, "You know, I think there are some clarinet and percussion pieces. Do you want to read through them?" So we started doing this. Picking the composers to write for us; at the beginning, it was just anybody who would do it! (laughs) Then, at the end, I mean, Eric Mandat became a good friend, so we asked him to write one, and some of the other composers that we've had it was just because we'd just befriended them somewhere along the way. You know, composers at universities want commissions. You come up with a little bit of money, and they're happy because they get a piece played. So, again, it was a necessity in having someone to play with, because I was so bored in Texas.

*AS: So, you played with her in Texas, and then when you went to Arizona.*

RS: It was J.B. He and I just developed a friendship, and I just asked him. I told him what we'd done, and he knew Susan, and so we started to play together, and we've been doing it every year. And, it's fun. It's fun to travel with him.

**Provided question: What composers have approached you wanting to write pieces for you? Was there a particular performance of yours that sparked their interest?**

*AS: Composers: have they come to you, and say, "Hey, I'd like to write this piece for you."*

RS: Yes. And there's a new one going on right now – I'll forward you the email.

The one composer that goes above the others, I think, in terms of writing for me, was Peter Schickele. I met him in Phoenix, with the orchestra conductor of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra that I played with for 18 years. I just quit last year. The conductor was really into these commissions, and they'd commissioned Peter Schickele to write another piece for them. The conductor and I were good friends, and Peter was in town doing a P.D.Q. Bach show. They knew each other from this other commission, so he just invited me to go to lunch with them. So, we're talking at lunch, and Peter just kept talking to me, we're sitting across from each other, and I was telling him about some of the recordings I'd done and stuff, and he said, "Boy, I'd like to hear those." He was staying downtown at this Crowne Plaza hotel, and I drove down the next day with *Dragon's Tongue* and the *Tarentella* CD, and the Joan Tower CD. Those were the three I had at the time. All of a sudden, he got very interested in writing a clarinet concerto, and he took elements of what I could do and put them into it. There's a big double tonguing section, there's a big circular breathing section, and that was really fun to work with him. The most interesting thing was when we recorded it, we got done, and we were all going to do something afterwards, go out and get dinner or whatever, and we had a little bit of time because they had to tear all the recording equipment down. The conductor was working with the recording engineers



to make sure they had all their notes set before everybody left, so Peter and I went across the street to have a martini. We're sitting there, and all of a sudden, Peter starts crying. I thought, "Oh, God, what did I do?" (laughs) and he said, "It's just so nice that somebody took my music seriously!" He said, "I didn't have to swing in on a rope!" (both laugh)

**Provided question: Other than contemporary music, what is your favorite genre of music to play on the clarinet? Do you have an all-time favorite piece to perform?**

RS: So, other than contemporary music, what's my favorite genre?

*AS: You know, I was just curious about that. Is there an old favorite or anything?*

RS: Well, I like Copland, but I guess that's considered contemporary music. But that's just because it's the first piece that I ever won anything on. But, when playing Mozart, and everything's done really well, and it's just like (makes a ch-k-ch-k sound, emulating clean 16<sup>th</sup> notes), and it's all fitting together, that's amazing. Copland would be the all-time favorite piece.

**Provided question: What type of legacy would you like to leave for future clarinetists, musicians, and composers? What would you like for them to remember about you as a musician and teacher, and what would you have them pass on to their own students and audience members?**

RS: Legacy? I don't know. Without getting too gooey, I think this conference has been really exciting for me. This is the first Clarinet Fest that I haven't played on in years, and it's been really exciting because I've just been going and hearing my students play. That's been really nice to see, and I care for all of them. I think that might be what I would like them to pass on to their students. I think that when you have an ability or you have a talent, it's almost a sin to not use that ability or talent, and I think that

you should pass things on. Everybody wants to live forever, but we as teachers live on through our students. That's now we extend our humanity to others. That's the thing that I would really like to have go on, what John did for us. John came to every band concert; I go to every band concert. I'm one of the only people to go. Josh Gardner and I, and sometimes the horn teacher, we sit ourselves at the back of the auditorium and call ourselves the 'usual gang of idiots' cause nobody shows up anymore.

*AS: That's too bad.*

RS: Faculty are different now. They have their own way of thinking, and nobody liked the fact that we would go, because they're our students. You can learn a lot from hearing them play. You hear them play a recital, and that's one thing. You hear them play in a band concert, and you realize, "God, I need to work on intonation with these guys," and you can hear that.

*AS: Right. And that means so much for them to see you there. I remember from my undergraduate days the few professors that did come, and that stands out in my mind. The oboe teacher would be there every time. It's a big deal.*

RS: It really is! So, I think that'd be the legacy. That would be the big thing. A few years ago, Baylor had an opening and I didn't apply. Scott McAllister wanted me to, but I didn't apply. He would be another composer that was really great to work with. So, they offered the job to Bil Jackson and he turned it down, and then they asked me to apply. So, they opened the job for 15 minutes on a Monday, I sent all my stuff in, and they closed the job. (both laugh) The thing that got me about that interview, and the reason that I eventually just walked out at the end, aside from the religious questions that I found a little distasteful, was the fact that nobody really wanted to know about my teaching. All they wanted to know about was my relationship with God, and what I really wanted to talk about was 'how do we learn', and 'what's a more efficient way of teaching'. Like what Josh does with the ultrasonic technology... I wish we could use that on a daily basis to make things easier. I mean, you've got

someone who can't tongue, and you're thinking, "I don't know what's going on." And you listen and listen, and you never can figure out what they're doing.

*AS: I always joke with my students that I don't have x-ray vision; I can't see what's going on in there.*

RS: Yeah, and I always say it's too bad we can't cut a hole in your cheek, but that's kind of illegal. (both laugh)

*AS: This has been wonderful. As I kind of go through it the transcript, I might find some holes with dates and details.*

RS: Oh, I'm sure there are a million of them.

*AS: Can I just email you? I'll try to do it all at once.*

RS: No, that's ok. And normally I'm actually pretty good at answering email. But with yours, I don't really like talking about myself. (laughs)

*AS: I'm so glad that you're doing it, though.*

RS: Well, this is very exciting for me. It also means I'm old. But, it's very exciting for me to be able to do this.

I was really lucky for a period of time, that I had, and I still have really great students. I was lucky that the pieces all fell into place when they were supposed to fall into place. I was actually lucky that I had to be a marching band director because it taught me how to get along with band directors. I mean, Clary...

*AS: Richard Clary?*

RS: Yeah. I always got along with him. He was at Tempe High School.

*AS: Dr. Wright likes him a lot.*

RS: Honestly, I was just really lucky. I was there at the right time, and the pieces just fell into place. They could've fallen another way. It's really funny, the one thing that was the constant in all of this that pushed me to the next level was disappointment at something. That's what my wife always says. Not getting a job out of Michigan and being forced to be a band director for seven years, that whole time forced me to practice, practice, practice, and I was doing it in order to get the hell out of there. When I was at West Texas, not being in the orchestra forced me to find a new genre. When I got to Arizona State, there was no quintet, there were no clarinets! I had seven clarinets – they were terrible! I had to flunk out the majority of them that first year. It was a terrible experience, but it forced me to rethink the way I was teaching. The first year we had seven students, the second year we had 29. It forced me to think, "This is how you recruit, and this is how you do things." It forced me to get more active in contemporary music. It forced me to do something that I wouldn't have done if I'd just been in a situation that was happy.

Actually, the latest one that's been a disappointment was when the orchestra changed direction in Columbus. I loved playing with them – they did those two concerto recordings with me – the Copland and the Schickele. We did so many incredible new pieces. Michael Daugherty wrote this piece for the orchestra, I don't remember what it's called, but in the middle it's got this screaming high clarinet part, all alone. Just screaming high B's and C's, and he wrote it for me. Michael said to the conductor, "Can I write something for Bob?" and he said, "Sure." Then *Brooklyn Bridge* was actually my commission, that clarinet and band piece. I was president of ICA then, and I was to do a commission, and it turned out to not be what I had anticipated. It was supposed to be 12 minutes, one movement solo, and it somehow became a 25 minute, four movement solo. (both laugh)

AS: *Well, I know we have to get going. I appreciate your time so much, and thank you.*

RS: Thank you.

## APPENDIX B

### Works Commissioned by Robert Spring,

#### Categorized by Genre

##### Unaccompanied Clarinet

Albaugh, Michael	<i>Rock-o-Rolla</i> for solo clarinet
Mandat, Eric	<i>SubtrainS O' Stratas Fears (SOS)</i>
Martin, Theresa	<i>Altitude</i> for solo clarinet
Rogers, Rodney	<i>Voices Rising</i>
Smith, William O.	<i>Epigrams</i> for solo clarinet

##### Clarinet and Piano

Aschaffenburg, Walter	<i>Pairings</i> for clarinet and piano
Etezady, Roshanne	<i>Bright Angel</i> for clarinet and piano
LaFave, Kenneth	<i>Echoes of New York</i>
Rockmaker, Jody	<i>Spring Fever</i> for clarinet and piano
Schoenfeld, Paul	<i>Sonatina No. 2</i> for Klezmer clarinet and piano
Schultz, Mark	<i>Of Shadow and Fire</i> for clarinet and piano

##### Concertos

David, James M	<i>Concerto for Clarinet "Auto 66"</i>
DeMars, James	<i>Magic Passes</i> , duo concerto for clarinet, piano and wind band
Martin, Theresa	<i>Double Take</i> for two clarinets and wind band
McAllister, Scott	<i>Freebirds</i> for two clarinets and wind band
McAllister, Scott	<i>Freebirds</i> for two clarinets and orchestra
Montano, Damian	<i>Double Concerto for clarinet, bassoon, and wind band</i>
Montano, Damian	<i>Double Concerto for clarinet, bassoon, and orchestra</i>
Schickele, Peter	<i>Concerto for Clarinet</i>
Taylor, Noah	<i>Double Concerto for clarinet, bass clarinet, and wind band</i>

##### Works for Two Clarinets

Etezady, Roshanne	<i>Siren</i> for two clarinets
Etezady, Roshanne	<i>Speak of the Devil</i>
Garrop, Stacy	<i>Stubborn as Hell</i>
Goddaer, Norbert	<i>Conversation for two clarinets</i>
Hackbarth, Glenn	<i>Flux</i> for two clarinets and computer controlled electronics

Mandat, Eric  
Martin, Theresa  
Martin, Theresa  
Prince, Whitney  
Rogers, Rodney  
Smith, William O.

*Bipolarang*  
*Live Wire* for two clarinets  
*Solar Flair*  
*Spin* for two clarinets  
*Igor's Ladder* for two clarinets  
*Four duets for two demi clarinets*

#### Clarinet Choir

Cohn, James (arr. Bert Six)  
Goddaer, Norbert  
Jahn, Grant  
Martin, Theresa  
Six, Guido

*Variations on The Wayfaring Stranger*  
*Paganinesque* for solo clarinet and clarinet choir  
*Pulse*  
*Recombobulation*  
*Springtime* for solo clarinet and clarinet choir

#### Clarinet and Percussion

Goddaer, Norbert  
Hackbarth, Glenn  
Kocour, Michael  
Koyle, Gregg  
Mandat, Eric  
Martin, Theresa  
Moon, Barry

Nelson, Joseph  
Prince, Whitney  
Prince, Whitney  
Smith, J.B.

*Sonata for Clarinet and Percussion*  
*Points in the Sky*  
*OnComing Traffic* for clarinet, marimba, and jazz piano  
*Kumbengo for Two* for clarinet and marimba  
*3 for 2*  
*Pulse Break* for two clarinets and percussion  
*Three Gifts* for two clarinets, percussion, and computer controlled audio and video  
*Sonata* for clarinet and marimba  
*5 for 25*  
*The Shaman Speaks*  
*In Light of Three*

#### Clarinets with String Quartet

Etezady, Roshanne  
Goddear, Norbert  
Rogers, Rodney  
Watte, Bart

*Wake the Dead*  
*California* for two clarinets and string quartet  
*Gargoyles and Zen Journey* for two clarinets and string quartet  
*Three Preludes* for two clarinets and string quartet

#### Clarinet and Saxophone

Etezady, Roshanne

*Glint* for clarinet and saxophone

Clarinet and Bassoon

Martin, Theresa

Schickele, Peter

*Riptide* for clarinet and bassoon

*Six Studies for clarinet and bassoon*

Mixed Chamber Ensemble

Garrop, Stacy

Gudaitis, Amber

Mead, Andrew

Plamondon, Taran

Rogers, Rodney

Schultz, Mark

Schultz, Mark

Sellers, Joey

*Frammenti – Five Minatures for Chamber Ensemble*

*Apparition* for clarinet, two percussionists, dancer, and lighting

*Chamber Concerto* for clarinet, violin, viola, cello, marimba, and piano

*Goose on the Loose, Theme and Variations for Five Musicians*

*Fibonacci's Spiral* for flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, string bass, and percussion

*Ashfall* for clarinet, horn, and two percussionists

*Ring of Fire* for clarinet, horn, percussion, and piano

*Apéritif, Tale, Digression, and Entrée* for Tuba and Clarinet

## PART II: PROGRAM NOTES

### Recital 1

#### French Music for Clarinet and Piano

Assisted by Jennifer Hughes, piano

Niles Gallery, Little Fine Arts Library

University of Kentucky

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

**Jean Françaix** (1912-1997) was a French composer and pianist who came from a musical family; his mother was a singer and a voice teacher, and his father was a composer, musicologist, and pianist. His talents were recognized early in his life, and as many talented composers of his generation, he was accepted to study with the famed Nadia Boulanger in Paris.

Françaix was a prolific and diverse composer, with compositions amounting to more than 200 pieces. While piano composition held a special place for him, he also became an excellent orchestrator, and enjoyed arranging and transcribing his own works, as well as the works of Chopin, Mozart, Poulenc, and Schubert, which were some of his own favorite composers.

In a time that others were abandoning tonality, Françaix took pride in positioning himself amongst neo-classical composers. His music is elegant, charming, and humorous, while stretching the technical demands of his instrumentalists, and his goal in composing was “to give pleasure.”

Françaix wrote his ***Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*** in 1967-68, and dedicated it to Fernand Oubradous, a conductor and chamber music instructor at the Paris Conservatory, and a bassoonist at the Opera de Paris. The piece was premiered on July 20, 1968 by French clarinetist Jacques Lancelot. It is composed in four movements; the first movement, *Allegro*, is in sonata form and includes a cadenza in



the middle of the recapitulation; the second movement, *Scherzando*, is in compound-ternary form; the third movement, *Andantino*, may be interpreted as a slow 'theme and variations'; and the final movement, *Allegro*, is a five-part rondo with two cadenzas.

Françaix's description of his own work is as follows:

This concerto is, or at least I hope it is, amusing to listen to. It is a kind of aerobatics display for the ear, complete with loops, wing-turns and nose-dives which are fairly terrifying for the soloist, who needs to have a good stomach and several thousand flying hours under his belt. I must say the poor fellow has been given the full treatment, including a slow movement full of phrases with great charm but with little time for breathing – rather like a long glide in a plane which is constantly on the verge of stalling. Finally, the pilot starts his noisy engines again, but remains carefree to the point of swapping his Air Force cap for the revolving wig of a clown.

**Philippe Gaubert** (1879-1941) was a distinguished flutist, winning a *premier prix* at the Paris Conservatoire in 1894, and second prize for his composition in the 1905 Prix de Rome. He was appointed as the Professor of Flute at the Paris Conservatory, and in addition to his instrumental performance career, Gaubert was the eventually named conductor of several leading orchestras throughout France, including the Paris Opera and the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. With these esteemed positions, as well as his prolific compositional output, Philippe Gaubert became known as one of the most prominent French musicians between the two World Wars.

*Fantaisie pour Clarinette*, which he wrote in 1911, was composed as one of the Solo des Concours for the Paris Conservatoire. The clarinet writing encompasses a wide range, lyrical and elegant melodic lines, and brilliant rhapsodic passagework.

**André Charles Prosper Messager** (1853-1929) was a French composer, pianist, organist, and conductor. A piano and composition student of Camille Saint-Saens and Gabriel Faure, he became a

prominent figure in the musical life of London and Paris, both as a conductor and a composer. His stage compositions include ballets, opera comiques, operettas, and toward the end of his career, musical comedies. Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians says of Messager, "His style may be described as enlightened eclecticism; his music was characteristically French, and more specifically Parisian, in its elegance and gaiety."

In 1897, Messager was appointed music director of the Opéra-Comique in Paris, so he was engulphed with the lighthearted sentiments of this style when he composed ***Solo de Concours*** in 1899. His former teacher, Faure, was a professor of composition at the Paris Conservatory at this time, and he convinced Messager to write the piece for the school's annual clarinet exam. The result was a brilliant short work that was not only used for the 1899 Concours, but became a favorite that was used in 1907, 1918, and 1929 as well.

While most of the Concours works from 1897 and afterwards were dedicated to the current professor of clarinet at the Conservatory, Messager's work curiously bears no dedication. Cyrille Rose was the sixth professor of clarinet from 1876-1900, so he would have held this position at the time of the composition. The previous year's Concours piece, written by Charles-Marie Widor, who was Messager's former organ mentor at Saint-Sulpice, was indeed dedicated to Rose.

French composer and teacher **Charles-Marie Widor** (1844-1937) was born into a family of organ builders, and became one of the most prominent organists and composers of organ music in history. His organ studies began under his father, and in 1870 at the age of 26, he won the position of head organist at Saint-Sulpice. This was the most impressive organ position in Paris, and he held it for 64 years. In 1894, he additionally became the professor of organ at the Paris Conservatory, and in 1896, the professor of composition.

While Widor was known primarily for his organ works, including his ten symphonies for organ, he wrote only one piece for the clarinet, his ***Introduction et Rondo, Op. 72***, which served in 1898 for the annual Concours as the second in a long line of commissions for the contest. Considered one of the greatest works in the French clarinet repertoire, this piece exploits the clarinet to its full potential, and remains extremely popular to this day.

## Recital 2

### Chamber Music for Clarinet

Assisted by Dominique Bellon, oboe  
Mattie Greathouse, flute  
Emily Kurlinski, viola  
Nicola Rohr, piano  
Loren Tice, piano

Performed at the Carrick Theater, Mitchell Fine Arts Center  
Transylvania University  
Thursday, March 9, 2017  
and  
Pavilion A Auditorium, Albert B. Chandler Hospital  
University of Kentucky  
Monday, April 17, 2017

Born and raised in Chicago, IL, **Robert Muczynski** (1929-2010) was a well-known American composer, pianist, and teacher. Throughout his early years, he dreamt of becoming a concert pianist, and in 1948, he enrolled at DePaul University to study piano with Walter Knupfer and composition with Alexander Tcherepnin. At the age of 25, he won national attention for a Piano Concerto commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra, with whom he performed it. A few years later, he made his New York City debut at Carnegie Hall in 1958 in a recital of his works.

Muczynski's compositional output was largely comprised of chamber music and piano works, all of which he composed at the piano. Some scholars categorize him as a neo-classicist with strong neo-romantic elements, and the influence of Bela Bartok, Samuel Barber, and Leonard Bernstein may be heard in his music. Abstract, concise, and constructed with traditional techniques while managing to avoid grandiosity, his compositions reflect a concern with mood and emotion, dark and gently restrained

lyricism, and vigorous drive. However, Muczynski greatly disliked academic analysis of his music, and wanted people to just “let it be.”

The *Duos, Op. 24* for flute and clarinet have a copyright date of 1991; however, the original version for two flutes (1974) is listed with a later opus number, Op. 34. When Muczynski transcribed the duos for flute and clarinet, he did so to feature Mitchell Lurie, former principal clarinetist with the Pittsburgh and Chicago Symphony Orchestras, and Julius Baker, former principal flutist of the New York Philharmonic. With either pair of instruments, the musicians must emphasize Muczynski’s use of dissonant and consonant intervals which not only convey tension and release, but result in overtones that enhance the richness of the texture.

**Max Bruch** (1838-1920) was widely known and respected in his day as a German composer, conductor, and teacher. He received his earliest music instruction from his mother, a singer and pianist. Bruch began composing at age 11, and by his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, he had written a symphony and a string quartet. This string quartet garnered a prize that allowed him to begin compositional studies with Karl Reinecke and Ferdinand Hiller in Cologne.

For 25 years, Bruch held posts as a choral and orchestral conductor throughout Germany. Some highlights of his long career include conducting at the German courts of Coblenz and Sondershausen, and in such cities as Liverpool and Breslau. From 1890-1911, he taught composition at the Berlin Academy, and received numerous awards for his work.

Bruch’s music is notable for its melodic strength. He enjoyed folksong as melodic source, and many works are influenced by the music of Scotland, Sweden, and Russia. Additionally, Bruch was influenced by Schumann and Mendelssohn’s music.

Bruch composed his ***Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*** in 1909, his 70<sup>th</sup> year, for his son, Max Felix, a gifted clarinetist. Bruch wrote a Double Concerto (Op. 88) for clarinet and viola two years later, for his son as well. When Max Felix performed the *Eight Pieces*, Fritz Steinbach (German conductor and composer whose work was primarily associated with Brahms) compared his tone and lyrical ability to that of Richard Mühlfeld, the clarinetist who inspired chamber works from Brahms two decades before Bruch's composition.

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791) held a special place in his heart for the sounds of the clarinet. In 1778, he attended an orchestral concert in Mannheim, and wrote to his father in Salzburg, "Oh, if only we had clarinets. You can't guess the lordly effect of a symphony with... clarinets." Unfortunately for Mozart, clarinets nor fine clarinetists were not widely available at this time, and it took several years before he began regularly including them into his own orchestral writing. With the exception of the "Paris" Symphony, K. 297, he first used clarinets in his revised scoring of the "Haffner" Symphony, K. 385 (1783), the *Masonic Funeral Music*, K. 477, and the Piano Concerto in E-flat, K. 482. Additionally, Mozart began to feature the clarinet more prominently in works from chamber pieces to beautiful accompanimental lines in opera arias.

The ***Trio in E-Flat for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, K. 498***, commonly known as the "Kegelstatt Trio", was written for one of the most prominent clarinetists of Mozart's time, his friend and Masonic brother, Anton Stadler. This composition changed the course of the clarinet's history, as it was the first of the outstanding chamber works that Mozart wrote for Stadler (amongst the *Quintet*, K.581 and the *Concerto*, K. 622), all of which inspired subsequent composers to view the clarinet as a more capable instrument. Prior to this composition, which was actually the first instance of this combination of instruments, the clarinet was a relatively new instrument with little concert repertoire written for it.

Mozart wrote the “Kegelstatt” Trio in Vienna, and his manuscript is dated August 5, 1786. Even with Stadler as his clarinet muse, the work is said to have been dedicated to Franziska Jacquin (1769-1850), a piano student of his. The Jacquin family were close friends with Mozart, and they performed house concerts together where Nikolaus (father) played the flute, and Franziska (daughter) played the piano. The trio was first performed in the Jacquin’s house with Anton Stadler on clarinet, Mozart himself playing the viola, and Franziska playing the piano.

The German word *Kegelstatt* is a place where skittles are played, or what we would akin to a bowling alley in present day. There is an unconfirmed legend that Mozart actually wrote the piece while playing skittles, and some accounts mention that he was with Stadler when doing so. However, the name *Kegelstatt* may have been added by a publisher, perhaps in confusion. Approximately one week before dating this trio, Mozart wrote twelve duos for horns, K. 487, in July of 1786 while bowling, as noted by himself on the first page of the his manuscript.

Regardless of the name, the *Trio in E-Flat*, K. 498 is an intimate and congenial work, written for a group of friends to enjoy performing together.

Born in Copenhagen, **Johan Lauritz Walbom Amberg** (1846-1928) was an accomplished musician from a young age. He was initially accepted at The Royal Danish Academy of Music to study voice, but he changed his emphasis to violin when vocal problems arose. Amberg’s talent won him a position as violinist in the Royal Danish Orchestra, with whom he performed from 1877 to 1905. Following his tenure in the orchestra, he devoted himself entirely to composition.

Amberg’s chamber music compositions in particular were very successful, and they were often performed not only in Denmark, but also throughout Germany, Austria, France, and England. His *Suite*

*for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, and Piano* was composed in three movements: 1) *Seguedille*, 2) *Devant la Cathédrale*, and 3) *Ronde villageoise*.

The first movement, *Seguedille*, takes its title from a poem by the French poet Jules Bois, which Amberg quotes in his score. Although a “seguedille” is generally known as an old Castilian folksong and dance form in quick triple time, Bois’ poem recounts how a gypsy girl with nimble fingers stole his heart, and disappeared. The title is also a diminutive of *seguida* (from *seguir*, meaning “to follow”); perhaps Amberg’s purpose was to create a spirited dance-like movement to depict following and yearning for the poem subject’s lost love.

The second movement, *Devant la Cathédrale* (“In front of the Cathedral”), begins with the rich tolling of bells in the piano. Each entrance of the instruments begins with full resonant sounds which gradually get softer, creating the impression of drifting away into the distance.

The third movement, *Ronde villageoise* (“Village Dance”), recreates a sunny, bustling village scene. The chattering of gossip can be heard throughout the instruments, as well as the occasional outspoken town member who will burst through with a new melody.



## Recital 3

### English Music for Clarinet and Piano

Assisted by Cliff Jackson, piano

Niles Gallery, Little Fine Arts Library  
University of Kentucky  
Friday, October 6, 2017

**William Martin Yeates Hurlstone** (1876-1906) was born on January 7, 1876 at Richmond Gardens (now Empress Place) in Fulham, London. He was from a well-to-do middle-class family, and was the eldest of four siblings. His grandfather, Frederick Yeates Hurlstone (1800-69), held the first presidency of the Royal Society of British Arts, and his father, Martin de Galway Hurlstone, was a surgeon by profession, but also held a strong interest in the arts.

Hurlstone loved music from a very young age, and he and his three younger sisters would often organize home concerts where they would play his compositions. While he received piano lessons, he was self-taught in composition during his youth. Hurlstone also played the clarinet, and had a fondness for wind instruments.

When he was 18 years old, Hurlstone won a scholarship to The Royal College of Music. He had great aspirations of being a concert pianist, and was brilliantly talented, but his serious asthma prevented a concert career. During his tenure at RCM, he was able to study composition with Charles Stanford, who on many occasions described Hurlstone as being his most gifted student. This was no small compliment, considering his contemporaries at the school:

- Thomas Dunhill – composition, 1893
- John Ireland – piano 1893-1897, composition 1897-1901
- Haydn Wood – composition, 1897
- Ralph Vaughan Williams – composition, 1890-92, 1895-1896
- Gustav Holst – composition, 1893

He left school in 1898 with an already outstanding reputation as a composer, which continued to flourish as his chamber works were produced at the British Chamber Concerts (1898-99). Hurlstone's aim was to promote chamber music, in particular that of living British composers, so while he did program his own works in these concert series, he filled the majority of the programs with works by his contemporaries. His stellar reputation during his school days allowed him to recruit his colleagues, who were also the area's most talented musicians, for his performances. In particular, his clarinetist was Charles Draper, a school mate of his who achieved great fame as a player, soloist, and teacher.

Throughout his career, he was known mostly for his chamber music, though he also wrote for orchestra, solo piano, voice, and chorus. Unfortunately, his talent did not have the time to reach its full maturity; he was constantly in ill health, and tragically died at the age of thirty. After his death, many of his works were published with financial assistance from friends and from the Society of British Composers.

Originally called *Suite for Clarinet and Piano*, the ***Four Characteristic Pieces***, written in 1899, were dedicated to Hurlstone's friend, the clarinetist George Clinton, who ran his own series of concerts at which these pieces received their premiere. The title was changed soon after this premiere to what we know it as today. The four movements, *Ballade*, *Croon Song*, *Intermezzo*, and *Scherzo* also exist for in a version for viola and piano.

**Sir Arnold Bax** (1883-1953) was born of wealthy parents in Streatham, London on November 8, 1883. Described as "a non-conformist figure liberated from society's conventions by the accident of his birth into an affluent family", he did not have to work or teach to survive. In his young adult years, he never had a conventional home; he instead moved from hotel to hotel, and finally lived out his last years

at the White Horse Pub in Storrington in Sussex. Additionally, he enjoyed traveling, and spent a great deal of time in the Gaelic far west, particularly in Gencolumcille, Ireland and Morar, Scotland.

Bax began to compose in 1896, and entered The Royal Academy of Music in 1900 to study with Frederick Corder. Also at this time, he discovered the early poetry of W.B. Yeats, which he declared “meant more to me than all the music of the centuries.” Noted as a very fine pianist, Bax produced seven symphonies, many tone-poems, overtures, ballet and film scores, concertos, chamber music, piano pieces, choral works, and more than 130 songs by the end of his career. Additionally, he wrote short stories and poetry under an Irish pseudonym. He was awarded Knighthood in 1937.

Bax was no stranger to the clarinet, having chosen the instrument as his secondary study alongside piano and composition while at The Royal Academy of Music. In 1901, his second year of his undergraduate education, he wrote *Sonata in E major* and *Intermezzo for clarinet and piano*, both of which have been recently rediscovered.

The ***Clarinet Sonata***, written in 1934, has two contrasting movements, with the cyclical return of the opening material at the end of the second movement. The work was premiered by English clarinetist Frederick Thurston, with pianist Harriet Cohen, at a London Contemporary Music Centre concert at Cowdray Hall on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1935. It quickly became one of Bax’s most performed pieces, and was published the same year. The *Sonata* was dedicated to Hugh Prew, an industrial chemist and amateur clarinetist who was a teammate of Bax’s brother, Clifford, on their amateur cricket team, the “Old Broughtonians.”

**Charles Villiers Stanford** (1852-1924) was born in Dublin, Ireland. He was a prolific composer of every type of music, including opera, and was an immensely influential teacher of composition. The son

of a successful Protestant lawyer, as well as a talented bassist and cellist, Stanford studied music in Dublin and London before entering Queens' College in Cambridge in 1870 as an organ scholar.

In 1873, he became the conductor of the Cambridge University Musical Society, and moved to Trinity College. Stanford returned to Cambridge in 1877 with an established reputation for composition, and was then appointed professor of composition in 1883 at the newly founded Royal College of Music. Four years later, he moved to Cambridge to begin another teaching appointment. As an instructor, Stanford was famed for his stern ways and blistering tongue, but his list of famous pupils at both institutions remains unrivalled. Among them were Vaughan Williams, Holst, Ireland, and Hurlstone. Overall, in addition to his compositional teachings, he was most well-known for his substantial contribution to the music of the Anglican Church. He was knighted in 1902, and he buried in Westminster Abbey next to Henry Purcell.

Stanford only wrote five chamber works for clarinet, including the present ***Sonata for Clarinet and Pianoforte, Op. 129***, which was completed on December 28, 1911. In both compositions, his Brahmsian influence is evident. However, the slow movement of the *Sonata* ('Caoine', pronounced 'keen,' which is an Irish lament) shows his allegiance to the music of his home country.

The *Sonata* was dedicated to Oscar W. Street, an English pianist, and Charles Draper, an English clarinetist. The first performance was given on March 16, 1916, as part of the Dunhill Chamber Concerts, a series at Steinway Hall in London. Draper performed the clarinet part, but Thomas F. Dunhill was the pianist for the premiere. Dunhill later wrote in a 1927 article for Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music that the *Sonata* is a worthy addition to clarinet literature:

The Clarinet Sonata, a beautifully wrought composition, deserves a special word of praise. It is a notable addition to a rather scanty repertory, and boasts a slow movement, in the form of a Caoine (or Irish lament), which is deeply expressive and poetically conceived.

The melodic construction of the *Sonata* is derived from varying combinations of its motivic elements, and in many instances, the piano part employs contrasting motives to that of the clarinet. Additionally, the piano serves an integral part, suggesting equal status with the solo clarinet. These characteristics are indicative of a strong Brahms influence.

**John Ireland** (1879-1962) was born in Bowdon, Cheshire. He had an unfortunate childhood, losing both parents tragically early, which led him to admit to feelings of insecurity and inadequacy throughout his life. This, of course, affected his creativity in a number of ways, not all of them negative.

Ireland's talent was immense, and he entered The Royal College of Music in 1893 at the age of 14, where he began piano studies with Frederic Cliffe. He became increasingly interested in composition, and was determined to study with Charles Stanford, which he did from 1897-1901. Stanford's teaching methods could be harsh, even cruel, and it has been said that the sensitive Ireland suffered. However, he was not completely subdued, and in later life he always spoke of Stanford's teaching with gratitude.

After his tenure at RCM, he initially made his living as an organist and choirmaster at St. Luke's Cathedral in Chelsea. It was here, from 1904-1926, that he established himself in the front rank of the English composers of his generation. In 1920, Ireland returned to The Royal College of Music, where he taught composition until 1939. Some of his most notable students were Benjamin Britten and Richard Arnell.

Ireland's early music has been described as "Brahmsian," but it then changed drastically in influence by the impact of Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky at the turn of the century. In his more mature

work, the quintessential English lyricism of Elgar and Vaughan Williams can be heard, one which shows strong roots in the Classical-Romantic tradition.

The clarinet was Ireland's favorite woodwind instrument, and his ***Fantasy Sonata*** is now considered a masterpiece of the British clarinet repertoire. He began composing the piece in Guernsey, to where he had to flee just before the German Occupation. He eventually completed it in 1943, and it was one of his last major compositions before his retirement. It was dedicated to English clarinetist Frederick Thurston, and was also premiered by Thurston and Ireland at the piano in January of 1944. The two musicians additionally broadcast the piece live on the BBC in 1948.

The *Fantasy Sonata* was inspired by the Roman comic poem "Satyricon" and by Ireland's experience being evacuated during the Second World War. It is a through-composed piece, and its lush and highly virtuosic piano part was described by Scott Goddard as "in all English music of the last half-century, there has been no purer pianoforte writing than this."

Contemporary English clarinetist Emma Johnson introduced the meaning behind the piece in her own recording program notes as the following: "a depiction of waves and water as soldiers went off to war; the women saying prayers for their menfolk; the women getting on with their work and daily lives; the waging of war itself – this last apparently to be "grotesquely played."

## Recital 4

### Partnerships and Creation: the Evolution of Clarinet Literature through Clarinetist/Composer Relationships A Lecture Recital

Assisted by

Dr. Jacob Coleman, piano

Dr. Scott Wright, clarinet

Niles Gallery, Little Fine Arts Library

University of Kentucky

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

#### **Introduction**

In *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, Jo Rees-Davies wrote an article entitled “The Development of the Clarinet Repertoire” that included the following quote:

So much of the clarinet’s repertoire seems to have depended on this type of partnership; whereas the world of the violinist-composer is that of the isolated performer and may be justly regarded as a history of individualists, the clarinet world seems to have recorded a history of friendships.

Some of the most highly-regarded and widely-performed clarinet literature is a direct result of friendships that have been forged between the composer and clarinetist. These works influenced contemporary and future composers and clarinetists to advance themselves in their writing and performing.

This presentation will explore some of the most important of these relationships, and will describe how each brought about a change to the current model of clarinet writing at their time. Additionally, a contemporary version will be discussed - a clarinetist who with his exceptional performances of extended techniques, his virtuosic technique, and his personality, has influenced some

of the most prominent composers of clarinet music today to change their own styles; that clarinetist is Robert Spring.

### **History**

In her article entitled “Players and Composers” from the *Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, Pamela Weston describes three distinct types of musicians who have influenced composition for any instrument throughout history.

1. Professional virtuoso – directly inspires a composer
2. Player-inventor – generally associated with mechanically operated instruments such as the clarinet, and the innovations that led to greater compositional possibilities
3. Commissioning musician – commissions works that expand and enhance the repertoire

Although there have been many of these composer-clarinetist relationships, there are six throughout history that are the most significant. These have been chosen based on the composers’ importance in the overall history of music, the level at which their music impacted clarinet repertoire, and the professional career and influence of the clarinetists themselves. These partnerships are:

- a. Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer
- b. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler
- c. Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt
- d. Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann
- e. Johannes Brahms and Richard Muhlfeld
- f. Benny Goodman. Goodman actually changed the process of the player-composer relationship – he was a jazz and classical clarinetist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who wanted to contribute to the contemporary classical clarinet literature, and thus commissioned works from some of the most highly-regarded composers of his time.



### Karl Stamitz and Joseph Beer

The collaboration between Stamitz and Beer was the first notable clarinetist-composer partnership. **Karl Stamitz** (1745-1801) was a violinist and composer, and Joseph Beer (1744-1812), of Bohemia was considered to be the first great clarinet soloist and the founder of the French style of playing. They formed a relationship in Paris, 1770, once Stamitz had left the Mannheim Court Orchestra.

Stamitz wrote 11 concerti for the clarinet, and at least six are known to be for Beer. These are among the first concerti written for the clarinet, and some of the finest written by Mozart's contemporaries.

Stamitz was already well-acquainted with the clarinet prior to his move in 1770 because the Mannheim court orchestra was among the first to include it as a core instrument in the orchestra. The classic 5-keyed clarinet was used during this era, and in the 1760s, that instrument had been modified, improving its tonal flexibility and intonation. The low E key had already been added to the A key and register key, and this new horn had the low G# and F keys added as well. These additional keys allowed for easier technique, and improvements in the key sizes and placements made for more reliable intonation and resonance.

Joseph Beer had an unrivaled technical command of the improved instrument at the time, and Stamitz's compositions gained significance largely due to Beer's virtuosic performances in Paris. His French style of playing has been described as brilliant and voluble – Parisians generally disliked the piercing and harsh sound of the clarinet, but they liked Beer's tone. His influence spread beyond his collaboration with Stamitz, impacting other musicians and composers.

Stamitz's ***Concerto No. 3*** is one of the most frequently performed of the eleven concerti. While it is written in C major and does not contain much chromaticism, the technical demands are still high

due to the consistently fast passages. Additionally, this piece is written almost entirely in the clarion register; the chalumeau register of the 5-keyed clarinet did not project loudly due to smaller tone holes.

### **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Anton Stadler**

Mozart was introduced to the clarinet during a London visit in 1764, so he knew of the instrument long before meeting Anton Stadler (1753-1812). The first time he composed for it was in his Divertimento K133, written in 1771, which was a piece that began to explore some of the clarinet's chromatic abilities.

His experience hearing the clarinet upon his arrival in Mannheim in 1777, where the instrument's potential had been further explored, resulted in a letter to his father in 1778 in which he proclaimed, "Ah, if only we had clarinets too! You cannot imagine the glorious effect of a symphony with flutes, oboes, and clarinets."

His final involvement with the clarinet before meeting Stadler may be examined in *Idomeneo*, written for the Munich court orchestra in 1781. Although there is idiomatic use of the clarinet in major and minor thirds and sixths, the chalumeau register of the instrument is largely excluded in his writing.

The Stadler brothers, Anton and Johann, were the first clarinetists to be employed with the Viennese imperial court as well as the emperor's *Harmonie*, and it was in Vienna where Mozart had his first encounter with Stadler in 1784. Anton Stadler had invented a new instrument with the assistance of Theodor Lotz - the basset clarinet, which had an extended lower range descending to a written C3. His playing of this instrument inspired Mozart's "Kegelstatt" Trio K498 for clarinet, viola, and piano, the *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings* K 581 (1789), the obbligato parts in *La clemenza di Tito* (1791), and the ***Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra K 622*** (1791).

Stadler's command of the chalumeau register of the clarinet, in particular, marks a significant change in the way for which the instrument was written. Where it was once avoided, Mozart exploits it for Stadler, who could reportedly produce a full and satisfactory tone in his lower range. Due to the voice-like quality of Stadler's lyrical playing, in addition to his technical fluency throughout the entire range of the instrument, Mozart was able to write music that demanded a performer to be more virtuosic than previously required.

Mozart's compositions for the clarinet have been described as "the clarinet's main glory. His Concerto in A major for Clarinet and Orchestra is arguably the greatest concerto written for the instrument, as the magnificent Quintet K581 is the most important of its kind" by author and historian Pamela Weston. This partnership of clarinetist and composer extended the musical and technical expectations of the clarinetist, as well as revealed a much larger realm of compositional possibilities, and it heightened the reputation of the clarinet as a solo instrument unlike any other.

### **Louis Spohr and Simon Hermstedt**

**Louis Spohr** (1784-1859) was a German composer and conductor, and was a much respected violinist during his lifetime. Among his many works, he composed 18 violin concertos. He was additionally known for inventing the violin chinrest and using rehearsal marks in orchestral literature for the first time.

Johann Simon Hermstedt (1778-1846) was a virtuosic court clarinetist to Duke Günther I of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. He was compared with his contemporary Heinrich Baermann as the great clarinetist of his era. While Baermann was praised for his beautiful sound, Hermstedt's technical abilities were what earned him an audience, and made him the perfect pairing for Spohr's style of composition.

Hermstedt met Spohr in 1808, when the Duke commissioned from him a clarinet concerto. That first commission was critical in the development of the clarinet repertoire, as well as the clarinet itself. The Duke was willing to pay handsomely for a piece that would effectively showcase his clarinetist's abilities, and it received the following review:

Since no composition whatever existed in which this excellent artist could display all the superiority of his playing, Herr Konzertmeister Spohr has written one for him; and setting aside this special purpose, it belongs to the most spirited and beautiful music which this justly famous master has even written.

Spohr's compositional style was violinistic and too technically difficult for the 5- to 6 –keyed clarinet of that era, which led to Hermstedt's adaptations to his instrument. In order to play the passages he added 7 extra keys and improved the bore and tone holes!

Appreciative of Hermstedt's innovations, Spohr wrote the following quote in the preface of his 1810 edition of the first concerto:

Since at the time my knowledge of the clarinet was pretty nearly limited to its range and I therefore paid little attention to the weaknesses of the instrument, I have thus written much that will appear to the clarinetist at first sight as unpracticable. Herr Hermstedt, however, far from asking me to alter these passage, sought rather to perfect his instrument and soon by continuous industry arrived at the point where his clarinet had no faulty, dull, uncertain tones.

Spohr's compositions were the finest clarinet writing in many respects up to that time, and they were thought to have achieved a greater musical substance and depth than Carl Maria von Weber, his contemporary, had done. In total, Spohr wrote four concertos, two sets of variations, and several smaller pieces, all for Hermstedt. These pieces truly bear witness to Hermstedt's abilities as a performer, and Spohr owed his understanding of the clarinet's possibilities to him. Much like Stadler had done with Mozart, Hermstedt drew from Spohr idiomatic writing, which explored the instrument's

possibilities to the furthest extent and prompted some much needed technical advancements.

Hermstedt concertized throughout Europe, spreading their fame far and wide.

Within Spohr's ***Concerto No. 1 , Op. 26***, the first piece written for Simon Hermstedt, the entire range of the clarinet, from chalumeau to altissimo, is utilized. Great technical command over the instrument is required to navigate the passages, which are far more chromatic and disjunct than previous clarinet music.

### **Carl Maria von Weber and Heinrich Baermann**

**Heinrich Baermann** (1784-1847) was a clarinet virtuoso of the Romantic era. He was well-known for his performance abilities, and for inspiring the creation of several compositions from notable composers that are still widely studied and programmed to this day. Among these composers was Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826), most widely known for his German operas.

In 1811, Baermann and Weber began their friendship, which initially grew strength from Baermann's agreement to assist Weber on his concert tour's performances. Baermann was already widely loved, and he had gained a reputation for being very handsome and charismatic – the ladies loved him!

Weber, who was seen as a bit sickly and unpopular at the time, knew that having Baermann along on tour, and working closely with him, would greatly help his own reputation. Baermann's ultimatum for this collaboration was that he would be provided with a new solo to play; this brought the *Concertino for Clarinet*, Op. 26 into the clarinet repertoire. Weber composed the piece in three days, and Baermann had only three days to learn it before its premiere. The piece greatly impressed the

audience, which led to two immediate concerti, the *Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor*, Op. 73 and the *Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in Eb Major*, Op. 74.

Also written for Baermann was the *Clarinet Quintet*, Op. 34 (completed August 25, 1816, just in time for Baermann to premiere it the following day!), and *Seven Variations*, Op. 33, which were influenced by a theme from Weber's opera *Sylvania* and was composed overnight by the two men on a Prague concert tour, and a "Duet" for clarinet and piano that they performed in 1815, which many believe is the Andante and Allegro of the ***Grand Duo Concertante*, Op. 48**

The clarinet was a 13-keyed model at this time, fully chromatic with new air tight pads, invented by Ivan Muller. These pads were stuffed with felt and covered with leather – they bulged so that they could better fill the sunken holes on the instrument. Other technical innovations were the metal ligature, which replaced the twine that previously held the reed to the mouthpiece, and the growing popularity of the wooden mouthpiece, taking the place of metal and ivory models.

A change made by Heinrich Baermann was to turn the mouthpiece around so that the reed was resting on the bottom lip rather than the top, giving him greater control over dynamics and musical nuances. Since he performed in so many locations around Europe, he greatly influenced other musicians to do the same, including the teachers and students at the Paris Conservatory.

This partnership brought about Romantic virtuoso works that have been proclaimed the most important additions to the clarinet's repertoire since Mozart. Not only did Weber play to Baermann's musical strengths with writing great, operatic lyrical lines, but he also wrote for his personality – lots of playful, extroverted passages that call for a dynamic performer to execute them properly. While these compositions are invaluable to clarinetists, they were also important to Weber himself. Baermann's virtuosic performances of these pieces aided in building audiences' interests in the composer at a time that he needed more popularity.

## Johannes Brahms and Richard Mühlfeld

In 1890, **Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897) decided that he would retire from composing.

Approximately one year after this decision, however, he was introduced to the clarinet playing of German clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld (1856-1907). The result of this partnership was the final group of chamber works written by Brahms:

- The Clarinet Trio, Op. 114
- The Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115
- The two Clarinet/Viola Sonatas Op. 120

All of these pieces were a major addition to the repertoire of the clarinet. Author Daniel Gregory Mason states in his writing on Brahms, “The particular incitement to the composition of these last four works (for clarinet) was Brahms’ delight in the clarinet playing of his friend Richard Mühlfeld in the Meiningen Orchestra, whom he considered the greatest player on any wind instrument known to him.”

Mühlfeld was the perfect vehicle for Brahms’ writing – he was both a fine clarinetist as well as an intelligent and perceptive artist with a vocal quality to his playing that created a very profound impression. In fact, it has been proven that Mühlfeld played with quite a bit of vibrato. In a review of the clarinet trio, and reporter noted that Mühlfeld’s vibrato was even more robust than the cellist’s. Could this be the “vocal quality” that Brahms enjoyed so much? The use of vibrato is also significant because it is generally frowned upon to use vibrato in classical repertoire in this current era.

The clarinet at this time had evolved a version of the Theobald Boehm system. Boehm had perfected the design of the modern Western flute, and Hyacinthe Klose invented a system for the clarinet that was inspired by that model. Moveable rings, greater flexibility, intonation, and tone production were the most significant innovations.

Muhlfeld actually played on an Oskar Oehler model clarinet, which took those innovations by Boehm, but also changed the placement of certain keys and their shapes. This model is still widely played in German-speaking countries; it has 22 keys, five rings, one finger plate, and finger holes that are spaced further apart than on the Boehm system clarinet. It requires more finger sliding due to a lack of alternate keys, but it is reported to have improved intonation.

An additional improvement during Mühlfeld's time was to mouthpieces, which increased in size in the late 1840s, and became considered a separate entity from the rest of the clarinet. They were made from harder woods, glass, ivory, and metal, until the 1870s when hard rubber was settled upon as the ideal material. Machine-made reeds were also invented in 1869, which allowed players greater consistency in tone and response.

Brahms consulted Muhlfeld throughout the composition of each of his works to ensure idiomatic writing, and also consulted the manuscripts of Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet* and Weber's clarinet concerti. Each work was premiered alongside Brahms, who derived such joy from their performances together that he gifted exclusive performing rights to Muhlfeld during his lifetime, as well as all of the earnings from their joint performances and both sonata manuscripts after their publication.

The ***Sonata No. 1 in F minor*** was the first significant sonata written for the clarinet. It is very conversational in nature, and it is a true collaboration between the clarinet and piano parts, rather than a solo clarinetist with piano accompaniment.

### **Benny Goodman and his various commissions**

Benny Goodman (1909-1986), who was widely respected as an American clarinetist, composer, and bandleader, was dubbed the "King of Swing" for his successful career as a jazz musician. A lesser



known side of Goodman, however, was his great interest in classical music, which began in the 1930s and continued throughout his life. His performances and recordings of classical music, as well as his own studies with well-known clarinet teachers, elevated his status in the classical world. However, it was his commissions of new works that place him within what Pamela Weston described as the third distinct type of musician who has influenced composition for any instrument throughout history.

Even though his early clarinet training had been oriented largely centered around classical music, he concentrated his early career on jazz. Goodman's first classical public performance was in 1935, where he played Mozart's *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in A Major* at a parlor concert. His performances and recordings drew mixed reviews from critics.

Goodman's first classical commission was from Bela Bartók, the *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Violin*, later retitled *Contrasts*. Violist József Szigeti was a friend of Goodman, and they approached Bartók together to request the piece. Szigeti described Goodman's playing to Bartok (perhaps to avoid any concern over him being a 'jazz musician'):

I can assure you that whatever a clarinet is physically able to do, Benny can get out of the instrument, and wonderfully (in much higher regions than the high note of the "Eulenspiegel." But to a certain extent the records will show you his sound and virtuosity. Do not be frightened by the 'hot jazz' records, he has already recorded the Mozart Quintet with the Budapest Quartet, and the next season he will play Prokofieff's chamber work for clarinet and strings in the New Friends of Music Series. The New York Philharmonic has also asked him to give a concert.

This piece began a succession of commissions by Goodman, and while he was primarily interested in generating new repertoire for himself from some of the most well-known classical composers of the day, the net result was a substantial expansion of clarinet literature.

Other commissions include **Aaron Copland's *Concerto for Clarinet***, Paul Hindemith's *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, Francis Poulenc's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*, and Leonard Bernstein's *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs* for solo clarinet and jazz ensemble.

The Copland *Concerto*, written in 1948, incorporated jazz material and American popular music in the form of 'boogie woogie' and Brazilian folk tunes. It is one continuous movement, but is often considered as a first movement and last movement, with a cadenza bridging the two styles.

### **Introduction to contemporary music**

As seen and heard through these composer/clarinetist partnerships, the evolution of the works written for the clarinet has been greatly influenced by the performing artists of the age. This has been achieved by (1) the observation and understanding of certain clarinetists' excellent technique and tone, which then pushed composers to increase the difficulty of their writing and to broaden the scope of technical and musical possibilities, and (2) by knowing the clarinetist's personality, which allowed the composers to add more character and musical appeal to their writing.

Composers throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had been increasingly experimenting with extended techniques within their compositions. This can be seen particularly in the works of William O Smith, Luciano Berio, and Eric Mandat.

Even though more extended techniques were being written for, and certain clarinetists were beginning to learn them and perform them with greater ease, there was not a plethora of multiple sonorities, multiple tonguing, and extended range written throughout clarinet literature. Maximum performance expectations were not as large as they are now. "Full range" of practical use to the clarinet extended to A6, as noted in Berio's *Sequenza*. Circular breathing is described by Philip Rehfeldt

in his book New Directions for Clarinet (1976) as being only achievable in the lower register of the clarinet. In the same book (1994 edition), Rehfeldt describes multiple articulations as being “commonplace on the flute and rapidly becoming common, particularly double tonguing, on the oboe and bassoon, but is has been mastered by only relatively few clarinet and saxophone players.”

### **Robert Spring**

Robert Spring is a clarinetist who is very well-known amongst other clarinetists, but perhaps not well-known throughout the rest of the musical world yet. He is currently the Professor of Clarinet at Arizona State University, a position that he has held since 1988. He attended the University of Michigan for his bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees, and he has performed with symphony orchestras, wind ensembles, and as a soloist throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia, and South America. His teaching career has spanned the world as well, through his own collegiate studios, masterclasses given, YouTube, and through his presence on the faculties of several summer festivals. He has published many articles on contemporary and extended clarinet techniques, and his influence has truly spread to anyone who plays or writes for this instrument.

Robert Spring enjoyed practicing and performing extended techniques as a younger musician, and began to realize that he was quite good at them towards the beginning of his teaching career. His performances had been heard by clarinetists at conferences and recitals, but he became especially well-known in 1994 with the release of his CD *Dragon’s Tongue*. This recording included true mastery of circular breathing and multiple articulations like no one had ever heard; Spring took virtuosity to the next level.

Throughout his career, Spring has commissioned works from composers for various reasons, from a necessity for music to play with a new ensemble to wanting a piece from a composer that had

become a friend. At this time, he has commissioned over 60 works for the clarinet. Some have been for solo clarinet, some for clarinet duo, some for clarinet and percussion, and other various chamber ensembles. The element that they have in common is that these composers knew they were writing for Robert Spring. They were very aware of his capabilities as a performer, and they also knew his personality very well. These two factors influenced the way that composers wrote, and the result was music that was loaded with the various extended techniques that Spring had mastered, and that had elements of his personality embedded as well.

### Multiple Articulations

Multiple articulation refers to double and triple tonguing. Rather than a single articulation using one consonant, the addition of another consonant sound or two enables the performer to play more articulations at a given tempo. Robert Spring became widely famous for this by double tonguing *Flight of the Bumblebee* on his *Dragon's Tongue* CD, and several works written for him include this technique.

**Peter Schickele's *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*** was written for Robert Spring to perform with the ProMusica Orchestra. Schickele incorporated some of the extended techniques that he knew Spring could execute from discussions with him and by studying his recordings; he wrote this piece specifically to showcase some of these performance abilities, namely multiple articulations, circular breathing, and beautiful lyrical playing throughout the range of the instrument.

### Multiphonics and Quarter Tones

Multiphonics were not a new phenomenon when Spring became well-known. William O Smith was one of the first to write these in the 1960s, and **Eric Mandat** wrote many works including these

sounds as well. Additionally, both of these men developed extensive fingering charts for multiphonics. It was Robert Spring's mastery of these techniques, and the fact that more composers felt comfortable writing them for him, that made the difference. Coupled with Spring's widespread performance career which increased exposure of new works, this furthered the literature of the clarinet.

Some of the best examples of this writing can be seen in Eric Mandat's works for clarinet. He wrote *Sub(t)rains O Strata's FearS* for Robert Spring, and it is widely considered to be one of the most difficult pieces in existence for solo clarinet. The example that I'm going to show you today is a more approachable one, from his piece ***Tricolor Capers***. His first movement, ***Portent***, is almost completely comprised of multiphonics and quarter tones, so it's a condensed example of these skills.

### Circular Breathing

Circular breathing was a relatively new technique, and Robert Spring actually had to learn it when preparing to record Joan Tower's *Concerto for Clarinet*. Spring had auditioned to be the one to record the piece, and won. Upon receiving the score, he called Tower to discuss its performance aspects. At one point in their conversation, he commented on how there was nowhere to breathe, asking where she would prefer breath marks to be added. She responded with, "Well, you know how to circular breathe, don't you?" He said, "Oh, yes – I just didn't know what you wanted me to do." Once he got off the phone, he must have appeared concerned because his wife asked him what the matter was. He said, "I have 9 months to learn how to circular breathe!"

In **Rodney Rogers' *Voices Rising***, circular breathing is in the performance directions. During this piece, the piano pedal is meant to be held down with a brick or other heavy object so that the strings can freely vibrate, and circular breathing keeps the clarinet resonance consistent enough to prolong

their sound. In order for the piece to be performed properly, one must circular breathe – it helps the various chords to keep ringing, and the half step movement of the chord progressions is audible.

Personality also comes into play within this composition. Robert Spring grew up within the church, and his religious background is important to him. Rogers chose to base his composition off of an Episcopalian hymn tune, and it shows up throughout the piece.

Rogers additionally capitalized upon Robert Spring's virtuosic technique – the composer was able to make this piece as hard as he wanted to, which is something that many composers have said they've done for him. The last page in particular shows this level of difficulty – after seven minutes of circular breathing, which is very taxing to the embouchure, there is a series of difficult fingering passages that push to the last note of the piece, an extreme altissimo D. The composer mentioned in an interview that Robert Spring and he have discussed a version that is accessible to more players, but he has not yet written one.

#### Clarinet Duets and Altissimo

The clarinet duet tradition started largely with Felix Mendelssohn, when he wrote the two *Concertpieces* for Heinrich Baermann and his son, Carl Baermann. These works are a great example of idiomatic writing for the clarinet, and are both beautiful duets, but the most interesting parts of them was the writing for the pair of instruments, which was very conversational in nature. Mendelssohn knew both men very well, and he wrote the parts to demonstrate how a father and son can work together, and then bicker back and forth. This is a wonderful example of adding personality into writing for the clarinet.

A very large part of Bob Spring's commissions are clarinet duets, and they were written for him to play with various friends of his. ***Stubborn as Hell*** is a great example of this adding personality into writing – **Stacy Garrop** wrote this after meeting Robert Spring and being quite charmed by this side of his personality. She shows this stubbornness by writing the parts to battle each other on one repeated gesture after another.

Another extended technique for which Robert Spring is well-known is his ability to play in the altissimo register with ease and beauty. Garrop knew that he could do this well, and exploited that register in the first clarinet part of this piece. Not only did she include altissimo notes, she wrote several lyrical melodies within that register, requiring a great amount of control and finesse.

## Conclusion

Clarinet literature has evolved throughout the instrument's history, and the most significant changes have occurred due to specific clarinetists who have been influential in moving it ahead with their performance abilities, and the composers that they inspired. Extended techniques are the newest innovation within this timeline, but even now, with Robert Spring's abilities and commissions, as well as his widespread performances, these extended techniques are becoming so much more commonplace and widely expected of players. Soon, they will not be considered "extended" anymore, but rather a normal part of our music to be performed by everyone.

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# *Adria Leigh Sutherland*

## **Education**

Eastern Kentucky University; BS in Elementary Education P-5	2007-2009
East Carolina University; MM in Clarinet Performance	2000-2001
Morehead State University; BM in Clarinet Performance	1995-1999

## **Professional Positions Held**

### **University Teaching**

Adjunct Instructor of Clarinet and Chamber Music  
Berea College; Berea, KY; 2012-present

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Music Theory  
University of Kentucky; Lexington, KY; 2016-2017

Adjunct Instructor of Clarinet and Music Education  
Georgetown College; Georgetown, KY; 2011-2015

Adjunct Instructor of Clarinet  
Transylvania University; Lexington, KY; 2010-2012

Adjunct Instructor of Music Theory and Music Appreciation  
Morehead State University; Morehead, KY; 2006-2007

Adjunct Instructor of Clarinet  
Asbury College; Wilmore, KY; 2003-2006

### **Studio and Preparatory Teaching**

Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts  
Clarinet Instructor and Chamber Music Coach; 2015, 2016, 2017

Private Clarinet Instructor and Clinician

Self-Employed: Central Kentucky; Austin, TX; Eastern North Carolina; 1997-present

### **Additional Teaching Competencies**

Elementary Instruction, General Education, Grade 5

Picadome Elementary; Lexington, KY; 2009-2010

### **Selected Professional Orchestral, Solo, and Wind Ensemble Experiences**

**Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra;** Lexington, KY; 1997-present

**Favonian Winds;** Lexington, KY; February 2017-present

**Freelance Clarinetist;** Central Kentucky Area; 1997-present

**University of Kentucky Graduate Woodwind Quintet;** Lexington, KY; 2016

**Berea College Wind Ensemble;** Berea, KY;

- **Solo Performance, 2015** (in duet with Emily Ross, Ponchielli Il Convegno)

**Paragon Musical Theatre;** Lexington, KY; 2004-2011

**Central Kentucky Concert Band;** Lexington, KY 2008-2014

- **Solo Performances, 2009 and 2013** (*Concertino for Clarinet and Orchestra* – Carl Maria von Weber; *Adagio and Tarentella* – Ernesto Cavallini)

**Advocate Brass Band;** Danville, KY; 2004

**Jenny Wiley Theatre Orchestra;** Prestonsburg, KY; 2002-2004

**Paragon Ragtime Orchestra;** New York, NY; 2001-2003

**Camerata Ensemble;** New York, NY; 2002

**Manhattan Productions Chamber Orchestra;** New York, NY; 2001

**North Carolina Chamber Orchestra;** Winston-Salem, NC; 2001

**East Carolina University Orchestra;** Greenville, NC; 2000-2001

- **Solo Performance, 2001** (*Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, W.A. Mozart)

### **Professional Recordings**

#### **Rose-Marie (1999 Media Theatre Cast Recording)**

Rockwell Productions, LTD; Media, PA

Principal Clarinetist

### **Scholastic and Professional Honors**

Kentucky Opportunity Fellowship Recipient; University of Kentucky; 2015-2016/2016-2017

Graduate Teaching Assistant; University of Kentucky Department of Music Theory; 2016-2017

University of Kentucky-The Graduate School, Fellowship Recipient; University of Kentucky; 2015-present

Concerto Competition; East Carolina University, NC; 2001

Winner

Teaching Assistantship in Clarinet; East Carolina University, NC; 2000-2001

National Wind Ensemble; Carnegie Hall, New York, NY; 1999

Principal Clarinetist

Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) State Competition; 1998

First Place, Woodwinds